THE
MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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THE TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF MODERN CHURCHMEN

By the EDITOR.

SOME years ago at a Modern Churchmen's Conference a young man ascended the platform and said: 'We are Modernists. What have we Modernists to do with History? We are concerned with present-day problems and how best to deal with them.'

The young man's question went unanswered. The young man possessed three Masters' degrees, but they were scientific. His temper of mind and outlook were not historical or literary. He was as ignorant of classical literature as he was of history. He was typical of many young men and women of our educated classes to-day. He was right and he was wrong. Right, because Religion — the Christian Religion — is a very practical affair. It is a way of life — the earliest name for members of the Christian Church is those of 'The Way.' We ought to begin with practice. 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.' 'This do and thou shalt live.' That is the Christian Religion. Nevertheless, Jesus taught His disciples to love God with the *mind*.

There is a mental side to the practice of the Christian Religion, as well as its spiritual and moral sides. The historical understanding of the Christian Religion has its place in this mental sphere. Legend, tradition, myth, superstition are ever ready, as the history of religion proves, to invade the historical field and lead to the misinterpretation and misrepresentation of the Christian Religion, with most disastrous results. *Corruptio optimi pessima.* It is extraordinarily important to know Jesus historically and to possess and propagate His gospel of the Kingdom of God in its primitive purity and power. This ought to be the great service

which the modern critical and scientific historical study of Christian origins performs for the Christian Religion. To know Jesus historically is not the only knowledge which the Christian Church ought to possess about Jesus. 'Lo, I am with you all the days,' means more than this historical possession.

The greatest of the Christian mystics to whom we owe the Johannine writings of the New Testament stresses in the opening of his First Epistle the historic basis of the Christian faith :

> 'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life. For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.' That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us ' (I *John* i, 3).

We know that the greatest difference exists in the historical conclusions at which modern scholars of the New Testament have arrived. Schweitzer wrote of Jesus : 'He comes to us as One Unknown.' A great liberal scholar writes : 'Do we know Jesus? Yes, we know Him very well indeed.' Between the fundamentalist four-square gospellers and the Christ-Myth school there exist many degrees of certitude. This may seem to some to make the search for the historical Jesus both hopeless and useless. This, however, is a conclusion unworthy of any sincere lover of truth. The lover of truth knows that truth exists and he is resolved to discover it. He knows, however, that there are right methods which must be used in the search for truth if it is to be secured, and he is resolved to learn these methods and to use them. It is because there is need by church people not only of a more adequate knowledge of the historic Jesus but because there is also need of more of the spirit of truth-seeking which is the needful condition of truth-finding that the theme of our Conference was selected. This theme, though from a somewhat different angle, was treated by the Modern Churchmen's Conference held at Girton College, Cambridge, in 1921, and led to the appointment of the Archbishops' commission which some years later published the *Doctrinal Report*.

The papers of the Conference created a painful outburst of ecclesiastical protest and denunciation, although when we read those papers to-day they will seem to many to be characterized by a spirit of sweet reasonableness, judicious scholarship and loyalty to the essentials of the Christian faith. Indeed several of those who read papers at that Conference on 'Christ and the Creeds' have since become bishops. To-day, in the Church of England, there is a tolerance of conflicting Biblical and theological conclu-

clusions, which did not exist a quarter of a century ago, and this tolerance, as religious education advances among all classes in this country, will certainly increase. All the papers read at Westfield College Conference, together with the Conference sermon, are published in this issue of the *Modern Churchman*. They are as follows :

Presidential Address : *The Demand To-day for the Historic Jesus*. By Sir Cyril Norwood.
Jesus: Myth or History? By G. L. H. Harvey, M.A.
Jesus: 'According to the Scriptures.' By David Scott, M.A.
Synoptic Gospel Criticism: Methods and Results. By Archdeacon Buckley, M.A.
The Historic Jesus in the earliest Gospel sources. By C. J. Cadoux, M.A., D.Litt.
Jesus: His Messianic Consciousness and Office. By H. D. A. Major, D.D.
Jesus and His Gospel. By P. Gardner-Smith, B.D.
The Parables and the Poetry of Jesus. By Norman Power, M.A.
Personal Characteristics of Jesus. By E. L. Allen, M.A., Ph.D.
Jesus and His Passion. By J. K. Nettlefold, M.A.
Jesus: His Resurrection and Ascension. By L. B. Cross, M.A.
The Jesus of St. Paul. By L. B. Cross, M.A.
The Jesus of St. John. By C. J. Wright, B.D., Ph.D.
Jesus and Christian Institutions. By R. D. Richardson, M.A., B.Litt.
Jesus and the Creeds. By A. W. Adams, M.A.
The Historic Jesus and Modern Evangelism. By Denys Whiteley, M.A.
Conference Sermon : *Jesus and the Future*. By Rev. Marcus *Knight*, B.D., Canon of St. Paul's.

The Conference was well-attended up to the extreme limits of possible accommodation. The discussions of the papers were for the most part of a positive and constructive character. Modern Churchmen owe a debt of gratitude to the authorities of Westfield College, for their generous, and indeed self-sacrificing hospitality in this difficult post-war period.

THE DEMAND TO-DAY FOR THE HISTORIC JESUS

By Sir Cyril Norwood, President of the Modern Churchmen's Union.

IT was said by a distinguished predecessor of mine in the opening address of a former conference that it is the privilege of presidents to ramble, and I shall shelter myself under his authority if I seem to you to enjoy too unchartered a discursiveness. It is not easy to frame this first lecture, for the literature of our subject is so vast. If one keeps to broad generalizations, little is contributed to the discussion: if one enters into detail, there is the risk of unduly anticipating later papers, or of trying to compress into one lecture what should properly be the material for a book. I comfort myself with the thought that you have always been considerate to me and shown yourselves an indulgent audience: I know that I shall need that indulgence this evening.

There is no doubt about the reality of the demand for the Historic Jesus in the world of the present day, where so many things are shaken which seemed likely to stand fast for all time. We have seen the recrudescence of torture and slavery, and gone near to having them imposed upon ourselves: we have witnessed lying and greed made dominant in the life of nations while all the time statesmen were professing the very opposite: we seem powerless to prevent a very real break-up of such Christian morality as has hitherto been the saving characteristic of our European civilization. The months which have elapsed since the termination of open hostilities have been frightening to all who think, and there is visible danger that we may be slipping back into barbarism: it is possible that we may fall into a gulf from which it will take many weary generations to climb out again. I do not doubt that we all feel in our hearts that it will not be so, because it cannot be so, and it is a good thing to have faith. At bottom I too am optimistic, and believe that this phase in which the knowledge and material power of man so far exceed his virtue and self-control is likely to be brief and transitory. But if you asked me on what evidence I come to this conclusion, I should be hard put to it to point to anything more definite than my belief in a Divine Purpose, and my conviction of the loving-kindness of God, a belief which is not shared by all.

For these reasons thinking men and women to-day walk in fear. They witness with pride the achievements of modern science, based on innumerable observations of objective fact, which have conferred undoubted blessings upon the human race, but have also brought us through physics into the presence of the atomic bomb, through chemistry into the possibility of wholesale poisoning by gas, through biology and bio-chemistry into even greater horrors af artificially induced pestilence. It is of no purpose to cry out against all this : dependence upon advance by observation of fact is now ingrained in the leading races of the world. The instinctive demand today is not for a creed dictated by authority, or for a religion which claims obedience because it is traditional, but for a rule of life and a belief in God that are based upon experience, that can be tested and found to be true. There are seekers to-day who are out upon many roads, both inside the Church and without, to find out whether that be practical, but it is not a topic which I wish to develop in general. Among these attempts to find a way of life and to solve the secret of the Universe stands foremost the Christian religion, basing itself upon historic facts, a life lived under full human conditions in space and time at a definite point of the past. It is the irresistible instinct of most to-day, who are trying to face the future and not to run away from it, to ask how far and with what assurance of accuracy we can get back to that historic life. Can we get back to first things, and upon them build a firm foundation? Was Jesus real, and is He real? And, if applying the methods of modern historical enquiry He is found out to have been real in His life in Palestine under the Roman Empire, is there any guarantee that He is real to-day? Or are we all deluding ourselves? Have we not more to learn from the methods of modern psychology? Or comparative religion? Or mysticism? Or Pantheism? Is it not more likely that we shall settle down in future to a general agnosticism, especially when we remember the ambitious schemes for educating the whole people to a standard never previously thought of by processes, which, if successful, will turn out men and women trained to look for a factual basis for everything, and disinclined to take anything on faith? This, as I envisage it, is the subject which we are considering in our conference this year, and I think that it is of great importance.

But it is not a new subject, and it is to me at any rate one of profound difficulty : I do not claim to have the reading or the knowledge to speak with authority, and all that I shall attempt on my part to contribute is a general description of the problem as it presents itself to me as an amateur who has read and thought a

good deal about it, but is in no way a professional scholar. Such evidence for what it is worth has value, and may I apologize at the outset if in the course of this lecture I appear to be dogmatic or dictatorial? Such an appearance will be due to my desire to be brief, and indeed brevity will be a necessity if I am to get anywhere. We are considering in this conference a field of criticism which has been very intensively gone over by scholars for more than a century past. Let me then plunge into the discussion, and begin by rejecting the view which is popular in some quarters, and which is the contention of the Christ-myth critics, that Jesus never existed, as He is presented to us in the New Testament, and that the Church instinctively and unintentionally made Him up as it went along. This seems to me to be not merely a case of putting the cart before the horse, but really an assertion that the horse is a projection of the cart, a mere association of ideas. What all these extreme people seem to me to fail to do is to account for how the cart got there, the cart at any rate being a solid fact. If there was no Jesus, I simply do not see how the Christian Church either arose or developed so fast and so far as it undoubtedly did by the middle of the first century. Let us turn to the consideration of what evidence we have and to what theories and interpretations it has led since the first scientific criticism of historic and literary sources came into being.

I suppose that before that era set in, which was not until the nineteenth century, Jesus was regarded as the great Teacher and Prophet, Who with Divine omniscience took upon Himself our human flesh, and led humanity from all the limitations of Judaism to a belief in a Divine Father, Who is the God of Love, and in a Kingdom of God which was in His due time to be established. Rationalism was of course active in those days, but it usually took the form of denying or of watering down the miraculous; miracles were happenings which were misunderstood at the time, or were misinterpreted later. On this supervened a long period during which the literary sources were criticized again and again, and it is right to remember how limited in quantity they are. There are the three Synoptic Gospels, there is the Fourth Gospel, there are a very few quotations in the Epistles, and beyond that the merest traces. Working over these, criticism has established the now commonly accepted conclusions, first, that it is generally not possible to reconcile the Gospel of St. John with the other three, though that Gospel does contain a certain amount of genuine history; secondly, that the Synoptic Gospels are older, and therefore more worthy of belief as history; thirdly, that there is much common matter which appears in its earliest form in the Second Gospel;

fourthly, that next to it in order of time comes the *Gospel of Matthew*; and fifthly, that the *Gospel of Luke* comes last in order, but contains not only in its special parables, but also in its historical narrative of the events of the Trial, Crucifixion, and Resurrection, valuable matter which is independent of the other Synoptic Gospels, and in the judgment of some scholars of superior value.

I hope that I shall not be considered reactionary or obscurantist if I say that looking generally at the whole field of criticism, and more particularly German criticism, in its dealings with this evidence, I am impressed with a sense of a very common fault, or perhaps I should say a very common human weakness. It is this, that you first of all make a theory which accounts for a good deal of the evidence, and you then say that what remains of the evidence in conflict with your theory is corrupt, or due to a misunderstanding enshrined in tradition, or for some other reason to be ruled out. The genuine is what proves one's own case, and I think that this very natural human weakness of ours can be illustrated again and again from the history of the criticism of the Synoptic Gospels, or of the origin of the Homeric epics, which are the two fields in which I have seen it at work. Thus Strauss more than a hundred years ago starting from the theory, or rather the prior assumption, that very little of what is handed down from antiquity is true in any historic sense of the term, came to the conclusion that only a small part of *St. Matthew* and *St. Mark* are true in this sense. He argued that most of the Gospel narratives came from the Old Testament, and the traditions and expectations fostered thereby. From this it is not a long step to the position which I ventured to reject at the start, that the so-called Historic Jesus is merely a synthesis, and never had a real existence. But on the whole criticism did not take such extreme forms, but produced from Renan to Harnack in the second half of the nineteenth century an inspiring picture of Jesus. Living in a period when the fanatical Jews had come to expect the coming of a Messiah in pomp and power to make the earth the inheritance of Israel, Jesus spiritualized and purified the whole teaching, and raised it to another and a higher plane: in the end He was misunderstood and rejected, and therefore resolved that only by dying for His cause could be make it prevail. This was the view prevalent in the period of modern critical liberalism, as Canon Streeter used to call it.

Since then discussion has mainly and increasingly centred around the problem of eschatology, though I ought to make it clear that there were many who felt even in the nineteenth century that the orthodox critical view, if I may so call it, did not fit in with all the facts, and particularly the Messianic expectations of the period.

Did He, it was asked, really spiritualize them? Did He not quite realistically tell His hearers that the Son of Man would come, and the Kingdom would be inaugurated, when this world should shortly come to an end? On this basis it would appear that there are only two alternatives possible. Either Jesus was brought up in the common expectations of His time, accepted them, and made them His own? Or the passages in which He is represented as giving literal acceptance to such views are all spurious, and came into the text because the early Christians forgot, or never understood, their Master's teaching, went back to the common Jewish ideas of the period, and passed them off with no intention of deceit or fraud, as actual sayings of their Master.

This second alternative was the one most commonly accepted for a number of years, and it introduced a purely subjective standard into the interpretation of the Gospels. If a passage was capable of being taken, in what the critic thought to be, a spiritual sense, then it was genuine; if not, it was the result of later accretions. The unfortunate result of this theory was that it impugned the validity of the rest of the Synoptic Gospels, which, if they lacked authenticity in this particular respect, might equally well contain other types of adulteration. Another and different type of objection arose from the fact that the passages in which Jesus is represented as telling His disciples that He is the Messiah are all of that type of literal statement which it is the rule of these critics to declare spurious, and therefore it seems to follow that Jesus never thought Himself to be the Messiah, and never represented Himself as such. So the dilemma shapes itself. Did Jesus think Himself to be the Messiah or did He not? A critic such as Wrede at the very beginning of the present century could adopt the second view, that Jesus was a teacher and prophet Who came to His end on the Cross, and was only after that event identified with the Messiah. If He ever thought Himself to be such, He kept it to Himself. This means the throwing overboard of a great deal of the evidence of the Gospels of *Matthew* and *Mark*, and led to the more radical and at the same time more conservative solution which is associated with the name of Schweitzer. He assumed that Jesus 'did actually live in the eschatological Messianic thought-world of late Judaism' and the resolutions and actions are to be judged as moved by those ideas and shaped always against that background. The claim which Schweitzer makes for this theory is given in his *Autobiography* (p. 62).

> 'Because this solution is such as to make comprehensible so much in the thought, the discourses, and the actions of Jesus, which has been incomprehensible hitherto, it establishes the genuineness of a number of

> passages which, because unintelligible, were held to be unhistorical. In this way the eschatological interpretation of the life of Jesus puts an end to all need to doubt the credibility of the Gospels of *Mark* and *Matthew*. It shows that their reports of the public activity and the death of Jesus follow a tradition which is reliable even in details. If some things in this tradition are obscure or confused, the explanation is to be found chiefly in the fact that in a number of instances the disciples themselves did not understand the sayings and actions of their Master.'

So writes Schweitzer of his famous book *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, but leaves himself, for all his simplifications, the same convenient door that other critics allow themselves. The mental process in all cases seems to be , 'I know that my theory is correct. Anything therefore that does not quite fit in with it must have been accidentally distorted, or must have crept in from outside.' Of course such a suggestion may be as true as it is convenient, but there is the uncomfortable feeling always at the back of the reader's mind that this is not quite the way by which, for instance, physical science has made its advances. Perhaps we are asking too much in demanding that any theory about the Four Gospels shall explain everything.

A more common reconstruction of the life of Jesus has in recent years perhaps been not by the way of eschatology, but by what the Germans call *Formgeschichte*,' and we translate 'Form criticism,' a singularly unenlightening term. It starts from the popular critical view that Jesus was just one of the type of those teachers and prophets that the East produces and has produced in such numbers, and differed from the type mainly through the quality of His genius and the strength of His ethical teaching. After His death, His followers imported, invented, and absorbed all the appropriate stories. This theory, like most others that deal with the New Testament, comes from Germany, where scholars have observed that the folk-tales of nations may vary in detail, but tend to follow identical 'forms.' The words of a famous teacher, for instance, are put into a historical framework, but it is not serious history: signs and wonders must have their appropriate setting too, but it has no more historical validity than a fairy-tale. The stories in the Synoptic Gospels are like folk-tales, therefore they were folk-tales, and the passages which tell us the story that gives us their settings are conventional and unimportant. I have not read much about Form-criticism, because I confess that I am rather impatient with it, and do not regard it as being closely related to the facts which it purports to explain. But I understand that if you fix your mind on the half-century during which the Christain Church was in a fervour of very rapid expansion, and of the most intensive propaganda, there was need to show that Jesus was the Christ in many

ways. Because they knew that He was the Christ, therefore He worked, must have worked, miracles: miracles were therefore recounted. Because He was the Christ, therefore He must have been a great teacher of His own followers: teaching therefore of the highest type known to the Jews, was taught, committed to memory, and declared to be from the sermons of the Master. And then there were the great miraculous stories, the Birth, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension, which passed from mouth to mouth at the assemblies of the early Christians. If you look at all these closely, they fall into the recognized folk-lore types, and in the narrative of the Gospels they are just fitted-in sections of early Christian teaching and preaching which may in reality have had all sorts of origins. As the Church increased, and the expectation of the Second Coming became much less immediate, the movement grew to collect the fragments or oral tradition which had come from the Christians of the first generation, and to put them into a wholly conventional framework purporting to be a narrative of the life of Jesus. Anyone who looks closely at the Synoptic Gospels, we are told, can see the lines of joining and connecting together which betray how it was all gathered into one. In the face of such a theory it becomes possible to appreciate more clearly than ever before the value of the famous passage of Papias: Papias, I may remind you, was a Phrygian Bishop of the first half of the second century:

> 'This also the Elder said: Mark, who had been Peter's interpreter, wrote down carefully, though not in order, the sayings and doings of Christ, so far as he remembered them. For he was neither a hearer nor a follower of the Lord, but was later a follower, as I said, of Peter, who (*i.e.* Peter) used to adapt his teachings to the needs (? of his hearers), but not as if he were making a connected arrangement of the Lord's words. So that Mark committed no error in thus writing down some things as he remembered them. For he made it his one care to leave out nothing of the things he had heard and to falsify nothing in them.'

I quote this passage at length, because, though it starts off with a description of how the narrative was got together which more or less confirms what the Form Critics say, since the truth is obvious, that the narrative of the Life was wanted when the eye-witnesses began to die off, yet the last sentence entirely goes against the easy-going and uncritical theorizing of the form-critics. So far were the Synoptists from fitting their various records into a conventional narrative, that we are told that Mark had one thing in his mind before everything else, to leave out nothing, and to falsify nothing. The extreme form-critics seem to assume at the outset that there is nothing in the Gospel story which can be true, and, this being

the case, they offer their own explanations. But I do not call this form-criticism, I call it criticism that is unformed and shapeless.

You will perhaps be already guessing that I am not entirely satisfied with any reconstruction of the historic Life, and I doubt very much whether all its secrets will ever be revealed. Nevertheless it is impossible to evade the task of historical reconstruction, because we cannot accept the narrative as it stands: it is impossible to accept statements which contradict, or are inconsistent with each other. I need not give instances, for the difficulties have been pointed out often enough: they prevent us from saying that we must just accept the tale as it is told. Christianity is based upon history, as perhaps no other religion is, and I have often heard clergymen announcing in the pulpit, especially on Easter Day, that the Resurrection of Jesus is the best attested fact in history. The first reaction of my layman's mind to this bold assertion has been that, if this is so, it is odd that there should have been such an unrest of criticism about it for the last century and a half. And yet there is a sense in which I believe the statement to be very true, for, even if we cannot say exactly what as a matter of pure history did happen, yet we can say as a matter of pure history that something quite extraordinary must have happened, and did happen, or else you simply cannot account for the facts. By the facts I mean the immediate rise of the Church in Jerusalem, and its immediate sweeping progress through the Mediterranean world. Let us look at the problem from this angle a little more closely. If we take the rationalist view, and say that Jesus was just a great human teacher, why did not the story end with His death, as it has done in all other similar cases? There were plenty of famous Rabbis and expounders of the law, plenty of prophets from time to time. But the attitude of the Jews to these, even to the most famous of them, is the attitude taken in the book of *Ecclesiasticus*, 'Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name liveth for evermore: the people will tell of their wisdom, and the congregation will show forth their praise.' In the case of Jesus it was published abroad at once that He was risen from the dead, that He was Divine, that He was the Messiah, and in that faith and conviction His runaway disciples became changed men and converted the world. What was it that created sudden strength out of weakness, and brought knowledge out of ignorance? Or if we take the old literal orthodox view that Jesus was omniscient, though I do not think that this view was ever quite orthodox in the judgment of the Catholic Church, there are many things which He said and did which show Him to have been inside the range of the ideas of His time, and not above and beyond it. In particular we get into difficulties with His eschatological

teaching. And if we say that He was just a dervish or prophet preaching the immediate coming of the last things, and at best expounding an *Interims-Ethik*, why was He not forgotten when He was shown to have been wrong? When did Jesus come to know that He was the Messiah? From His Birth? From His Baptism? Or gradually, as He drew towards the end of His Ministry, and saw that He must face death? Or did He never know, and was it only realized when He that was dead came again to His disciples? To get a complete and convincing picture it must show someone who was not merely teacher but prophet, healer not only of men's bodies but of their souls, with full humanity, but in a real sense Divine, Who died upon the Cross, and in a real sense rose again, Who died, and is by the experience of successive generations the living Christ? It is little wonder that when we come to picture exactly what was the personality of Him who walked in the countryside of Galilee in the reign of Tiberius we get into difficulties and do not see our way clear.

The inconsistencies in the narratives and the conflicts of evidence are often quoted as proofs that the Gospels are not worthy of trust, and cannot be held to be reliable. I confess that I am unimpressed by this line of attack. I remember that I have read that Professor Burkitt once said that the most marvellous thing in Church History is the production and the recognition of the Synoptic Gospels. One can see, as I have already said, that, as those of the first generation who had been followers and disciples died off, there would be a great and rapidly increasing demand for accounts of the human life of the Lord and Master, and a putting down of the story of the great works and of the wonderful teaching which had changed men's lives. What would you expect to be the result of this demand? Surely a strange and exaggerated story, of things wild, wonderful and miraculous. Such narratives were produced in considerable numbers, and have in some cases been made accessible to us in *The Apocryphal New Testament* by M. R. James. But these apocryphal narratives were never recognized by the Church, and never anywhere or at any time challenged the supremacy of the Four accepted Gospels. And yet no attempt was made to edit these four histories: the palpable inconsistencies that are left in the text are to me proof of the honesty of the work. Nor are they greater than one would expect when one remembers that not less than half a century had elapsed since the date when the events which are described took place, and that these Gospels interweave with a common tradition other traditions which have come from different authorities and grown up in very different congregations. Surely it is a marvellous thing that they do not differ more than

they do: surely it is also a marvellous thing that they are so simple and at the same time so profound. I hold that there can be no other cause for these plain facts than the reason that the story is a true story, set down by authors who were concerned to make it neither more nor less than what they had been taught that it was. I believe that all the Synoptists made it their aim to do what Papias said of Mark in the passage which I have already quoted: they made it their one care to leave out nothing of the things which they had heard and to falsify nothing in them. That is why the Church accepted them and no others. May I quote a passage from a familiar work, Glover's *The Jesus of History*.

> 'The constituency, for which the Gospels were written, was steeped in the tradition of Jesus' life, and the Christians accepted the Gospels, as embodying what they knew: and there were still survivors from the first days of the Gospel. When Boswell's *Life of Johnson* was published, the great painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds, a lifelong friend of Johnson, said it might be depended upon as if delivered upon oath: Burke too had a high opinion of the book. In the same way the Gospels come recommended to us by those who knew Jesus.'

That is why inconsistencies are tolerated, and why there is no dressing-up of a fiction.

After all, the story is, when you come to examine it critically, not at all the sort of story which is likely to have been invented, for the thing which did happen was not what any human judgment would have expected. Putting aside all that Jesus may have Himself foreknown, whether He told the disciples that He was the Messiah or not, it certainly appears that the earliest teaching of the disciples, as they gathered together again in Jerusalem, was that Jesus, who had been crucified, was assuredly risen from the dead, and therefore He was the Messiah. But this was not at all the sort of thing which the Jews were expecting, and a Messiah who had been crucified upon the Cross must have seemed so paradoxical as to be an outrage on their common-sense. As to the educated Gentiles, we have the record of the derisory and indifferent feelings with which they received this strange Gospel in the story of Paul's sermon at Athens, in which we are constrained to note that it met with a very partial success. 'And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, and others said, "We will hear thee again of this matter." So Paul departed from among them.' There is here no attempt to disguise the truth; it is clear that at first sight the record was not in the least likely to attract either the educated Jew or the educated Gentile. Yet it was this story which prevailed, and was carried everywhere about the world: it must

have been the story of a real man, since invention would most assuredly have offered a very different figure.

The argument which I am seeking to establish is further illustrated, and in my opinion confirmed, by the history of the development which took place in the thought of St. Paul, and of the doctrine approved by the early Councils. Here, as at all points in this paper, I can only touch upon the subject in outline, rather indicating directions which thought may follow than working a theory out step by step together with the evidence. I hold that careful study of the writings of St. Paul goes to establish that he began with the simple beliefs that he must have acquired from the disciples and immediate followers. Jesus was to return in the immediate future, a triumphant Messiah, and I doubt not that this triumph was at first envisaged as primarily the concern and the privilege of the chosen people. But soon St. Paul came to see it as the ransoming and restoration of all humanity. When he launched forth on his journeys, it was still the message that the end of the world is at hand, that the Kingdom is coming, which he preached to the Gentiles, at Thessalonica and at Corinth. When the end did not manifest itself, Paul did not feel himself discredited, but broadened and deepened his conceptions of the divinity of Jesus Christ and of its universal appeal to all humanity. He threw so much emphasis on to his doctrine of the Divinity of the Saviour that there have been many who have argued that Paul did not as a matter of fact know much, if anything, about the history of the life of the human Jesus, and was simply not interested. I am not going to turn aside into that controversy, but I am contenting myself with reminding you that the Epistles of St. Paul do not mention a parable, they do not refer to any miracle, they scarcely quote a saying, and do not appeal to the words and authority of Jesus in all the controversy with the Jews about the law. In making Christianity a world religion Paul omitted, or seemed to omit, the human story of its Founder, and the Gentile world in general found little difficulty in accepting the God, and much in accepting the Man. Humanly speaking, we should expect therefore that the historical and human side would have become obscured, and would have faded out, but this is just what did not occur. When you consider the later teaching of St. Paul, and the Fourth Gospel, in relation to each other, you can well understand why there should have risen up the sect of the Docetists, who thought that the human life of Jesus was only apparently real, that there was a Divine Spirit which in appearance inhabited the human body from the time of the Baptism to the time of the Cross. We can realize the danger to the early Church from the side of Gnosticism, which would have turned Christianity into

a theosophy. In face of these dangers the early Church did not waver, but maintained that Jesus was both man and God. I submit that it could never have done this so assuredly if the picture of Jesus as given in the Synoptic Gospels had not been in the main a true picture of a life actually lived under full ordinary human conditions, and passing through Crucifixion and apparent death to a Resurrection which in a living sense was felt to be real.

I must not pursue my enquiry further into the doctrinal field, 'where armies whole have sunk': there will always be many for whom the historical facts will be comparatively unimportant, and who do not wish to look back beyond the blinding light which shone upon the road to Damascus. But there will always be many also, who will hold fast to the record of the human life, and ask insistently whether it be true. Particularly do I consider this to be true of the men and women of the present age, who tend to be increasingly educated on the basis of scientific method: already they regard much of the Christian doctrine as absolescent, if not obsolete, as couched in the unintelligible language of an age that is gone by. They know that this view is hasty, but they have not time to bother about it. They want to pass on to the facts, to see the Founder as He walked among men, to hear Him as He preached, and in the simplest spirit to follow His leading. In all those parts of the world and among all those classes which have been under the influence of the Reformation, I should say that this attitude to Christianity is now dominant: but where Roman Catholicism and the Greek Church have held sway, I think that the case is different: there the humanity of Jesus tends to count for little, and too often to be wholly obscured. To me that is an impaired tradition, but it is not valueless.

This leads me to say that we must be tolerant of one another. I am well aware how partial and imperfect has been my exposition, but at least what I have said goes to show how any reconstruction of the life of Jesus is bound to be complex, and is sure to be disputed. There will never be a reconstruction which will command universal assent, and no two honest thinkers will produce quite the same picture from the evidence. Therefore I say again, we must have tolerance, and we need it all along the line. There are definite points in which we need it most, and I have in mind particularly the doctrine of the Virgin Birth, the difficulties raised by the miracles as related in the Gospels, and the interpretation which has to be given to the narrative of the Resurrection. Remembering that there is a gap of half a century between the end of the life and the first written record that we have, we must surely be prepared to let opinions differ. This freedom to differ in matters which are not

essential, even though they appear essential to some, has been secured for us by the *Doctrinal Report*, and I have always regarded that document, now too little known and too infrequently quoted, as at once the justification of our Union and the provider of the sole basis on which our Church and the Free Churches and tens of thousands who are in sympathy with us, but not in communion, can re-unite in a living Fellowship.

In the end it is not the exactitude of the historic record, its complete correctness in this detail or that, which guarantees the truth of the Gospel and its message. Let me end by quoting the example and the words of Schweitzer, which have always impressed me, because I cannot forget that Schweitzer is the scholar who thought he had proved that Jesus was entirely conditioned by His time, and yet who gave up honour, fame, and worldly success to work as a doctor in an African jungle.

> 'Jesus,' he writes, 'does not require of men to-day that they be able to grasp either in speech or thought Who He is. He did not think it necessary to give those who actually heard His sayings any insight into the secret of His personality, or to disclose to them the fact that He was that descendant of David who was one day to be revealed as the Messiah. The one thing He did require of them was that they should actively and passively prove themselves men who had been compelled by Him to rise from being as the world to being other than the world, and therefore partakers of His peace. Because, while I was investigating and thinking about Jesus, all this became a certainty to me, I let my quest of the Historical Jesus end with the words: As one unknown and nameless He comes to us, just as on the shore of the lake He approached those men who know not who He was. His words are the same: "Follow thou Me!" and He puts us to the tasks which He has to carry out in our age. He commands. And to those who obey be they wise or simple, He will reveal Himself through all that they are privileged to experience in His fellowship of peace and activity, of struggle and suffering, till they come to know, as an inexpressible secret, Who He is.'

JESUS: MYTH OR HISTORY?

By the Rev. G. L. H. Harvey, M.A., Editor and Contributor,
The Church and the Twentieth Century.

'THE misty creations of religion.' This phrase was used by Marx when he spoke of 'the earthly core of the misty creations of religion.' Technology, we know, he regarded as the core of all things, not excluding politics, ethics, or religion. I am not concerned here with Marxism; but the phrase 'the misty creations of religion' is arresting, suggestive, and not unjust in so far as it does not necessarily imply that religion itself is only mist. Religion has at all times produced imaginative creations which, so far as they cut loose from actuality, may properly be described as misty. These imaginative products, allowing ourselves a wide and free use of the term, we may call myths. The distinguished historian, Mr. A. L. Rowse, has stressed the part played by imagination in the genesis of religious myth. He points out the relationship between the angelic hierarchy of mediaeval belief and the feudal hierarchy on earth, of which it was a reflection. 'But,' he adds, 'it was not consciously thought out; that was its strength: its roots were in the life of imagination and belief. Only a rationalist like Marx would expect to arrive at it by thinking.'[1]

However, even imagination does not make bricks without straw. It needs materials from which to fashion its constructions. The myth of a flood which overwhelmed the world may well have had a factual basis in a tradition of some spectacular flood or floods. But this was not all. With the flood it combined the conception of a Divine Being, whose existence, one may hold, was a rational inference, though one not necessarily reached by an ordered intellectual process, from the nature of the world in which man found himself. Then into the complete picture there enters a natural phenomenon, the rainbow, as a symbol of the beneficence of the Divine Being. Finally, we do not know the extent to which the *J* or the *P* versions of the myth had been consciously and deliberately modified for theological reasons, nor how far the final editor who combined them shaped them for his own purpose. It would be rash to assume that the myth, in the form in which it has reached us, just grew.

[1] A. L. Rowse, *The Use of History*, p. 126.

A myth may have behind it a complex of disparate material which it is difficult or impossible completely to disentangle. So far as it is pure myth it fuses the material into a unity by the operation of poetic imagination. That is why many religious myths are of great beauty. It is important not to over-simplify either the material embodied in the myth or the imaginative process itself.

Early religions were fertile of myths. In a modified, purified, and, in some measure, disciplined form they often persisted in the more highly developed religions. Do we not still, in the course of Christian worship, read the characteristically mythical account of the creation of man, and of his misadventures in the Garden of Eden? But myths belong to the dawn of the human race, when imagination predominated over reason. As the race grew up, reason gradually and fitfully gained control over imagination, though we must admit that in this, as in other respects, we have not yet attained to full manhood. Irrationalism is still very potent in all departments of life, in politics no less than in religion. Professor Murphy points out that, in the development of the child, the dome of the head, which contains the part of the brain which is the organ of the imagination, develops earlier and more rapidly than the frontal region which contains that part which is associated with reason.[2] So it is with the development of the human race. The most primitive human types have markedly low foreheads, whereas the part of the brain associated with imagination is hardly less developed in them than it is in the highest modern types. His remarkable wall-carvings are sufficient testimony to the high artistic ability of the cave-man. Primitive myth may, somewhat paradoxically, be described as a kind of sub-rational picture thinking.

To-day there are signs of a regression towards the primitive. Professor Collingwood notes a modern tendency 'to choose leaders not for their intellectual powers but for their ability to excite mass-emotions,' and suggests that 'even the characterstic facial expression of a political leader has changed from the expression of a thinker (the mathematician-thinker's face of a Napoleon, the humanist-thinker's face of a Gladstone) to the expression of a hypnotist, with scowling forehead and glaring eyes.'[3] We may think that Professor Collingwood is somewhat fanciful in seeing a reversion towards a primitive type in the physiognomy of political leaders; but another scholar, Signore Guido de Ruggiero, has little doubt that we have witnessed a corresponding spiritual regression in the ousting of ideals by myths. Myth and ideology are

[2] John Murphy, *Lamps of Anthropology*, p. 60.

[3] R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Metaphysics*, p. 139.

closely allied. The ideology of the pure race or of the superman is very congenial to the Wagnerian mythology, which has ancient roots. It has little enough to do with reason. Signore de Ruggiero thus sums up what, in his judgment, has been happening in our times:

> 'The activist irrationalism of our times . . . has derided the ideals as empty utopias, and as futile philandering with abstract reason, and has claimed to replace them by the myths, as formulations of action and crystallizations of energies and feelings, endowed with an expansive and explosive force.'[4]

It is, then, not altogether surprising that some theologians of to-day, influenced by the general climate, have shown a concurrent tendency to stress the value and importance of myth. Biblical mythology is placed on the same level as Biblical history and Biblical prophetic teaching. After all, is not the Bible the Word of God? And do we not find myth in the Bible? History is envisaged in a framework of myth, with the myth of the Fall of Man at one end and an apocalyptic myth at the other, and is to be interpreted in the light of these two myths which are thus determinative of theology. This is a kind of hang-over from the days of our grandfathers, who held views on the verbal infallibility of the Bible which are untenable by their descendants, a hang-over which is strongly influenced by the recrudescence of irrationalism. It is accompanied by an absolute theological authoritarianism, again a theological reflection of political and social authoritarianism. Criteria are frowned on, whether criteria of truth or criteria of authority. Naturally Liberal theology is contemned along with the great humanistic tradition of Western Christendom.

The apocalyptic myth has affected the modern conception of Jesus.. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that some theologians substitute for the Jesus of history an eschatological Christ. This eschatological type of myth is congenial to ages of despair or of disillusionment. It flourished in Palestine in the period which preceded and followed the birth of Jesus. The mythopocic faculty produced a luxuriant crop of apocalyptic writings. Imagination ran riot. Oriental imagery had an unrestrained fling in depicting the coming end of the age and the catastrophic triumph of God and His chosen people. It is, then, not surprising that Christian writings were affected. In *Mark* we find the Little Apocalypse of the thirteenth chapter, and can trace its influence in the other Synoptic Gospels. The apotheosis of Christian apocalyptic was *Revelation.*

[4] Guido de Ruggiero, *Myths and Ideals,* p. 10.

There appears to have been a fairly rapid development of apocalyptic mythology among the early Christian communities, but it is questionable whether it was prominent from the very first. Christianity emerged from the synagogue, and the type of religion which had its home in the synagogue was sober and restrained. The Rabbis were not visionary ecstatics. Fortunately in the early chapters of Acts we have specimens of the earliest Christian preaching which appear to reproduce its general tone with considerable fidelity. Admittedly the speeches of Peter are more or less free compositions by the author; but their undeveloped Christology indicates that he was using reliable sources of information about the substance and tone of Peters' preaching. One of the things which strikes us about it is the almost entire absence of apocalyptic colouring. Indeed there is only one reference, and that a passing one, to any second coming of Jesus.

> 'Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of His holy prophets which have been since the world began.'

Even here there is little enough of the feverish apocalypticism which we find seething in the minds of the Thessalonians some twenty years later, by when there had been a rapid development.

Dr. Glasson in his recent important book on eschatology[5] gives reasons why we should not exaggerate the influence of Jewish apocalyptic mythology on the most primitive Christian thought. He attaches great importance in this connexion to the Hellenist attribution to Jesus of the title of Lord. In the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, Lord is the usual appellation of God, and thus it was natural and easy to transfer to Jesus Old Testament language about God. It was thus, he argues, that the Day of the Lord Jehovah became the Day of the Lord Jesus. It was thus that apocalyptic originally entered into the Christian faith rather than through the influence of specifically apocalyptic Jewish writings.

Some thirty or forty years elapsed before the traditions concerning the life and teaching of Jesus began to take authoritative shape in various centres in the form of written Gospels. Scholars are in general agreement as to the immediate methods of their compilation, though the form in which the original tradition developed is a matter of divergent speculation, and is likely to remain so. A leading English scholar, Dr. Streeter, has pointed out that the further back we push our researches the fainter becomes the apocalyptic colouring of the records. He takes it that *Q*, the common source used by *Luke* and *Matthew*, is earlier even than *Mark*.

[5] T. F. Glasson, *The Second Advent*.

On this basis he traces the growing development of apocalyptic mythology.[6] *Luke* and *Matthew*, for example, reproduce *Q* in substantially the same form in the saying which occurs in *Luke* as

> 'He that denieth me in the presence of men shall be denied in the presence of the angels of God' (*Luke* xii, 9)

and in *Matthew* as

> 'Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven' (*Matthew* x, 33).

So much for *Q*. When we turn to *Mark* we find the same idea enshrined in a definitely more apocalptic form. Here the Son of Man will be ashamed of the man who is ashamed of Him

> 'when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels' (*Mark* ix, 38).

But when we come to *Matthew*, we have finally entered the realm of apocalypse and eschatology. Here we read,

> 'The Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels and then shall He render unto every man according to his deeds' (*Matthew* xvi, 27).

Even the most insensitive readers can hardly fail to perceive the progressive intensification of the apocalyptic colouring.

It is as unquestionable as it is significant that *Matthew*, the latest of the Synoptic Gospels, is the one most deeply imbued with apocalyptic mythology. How far the thought of Jesus Himself was shaped in apocalyptic form, and how far He expressed his teaching in apocalyptic terms, I am not now concerned to discuss. No doubt the development of apocalyptic mythology was stimulated by the fall of Jerusalem with its attendant horrors, for the apocalyptic imagination thrives on horrors. The Domitian persecution stimulated it still further. It reached fever heat in *Revelation*. There indeed we find creations of the religious imagination smoky rather than misty. The atmosphere is lurid; fantastic and portentous figures loom up through the gloom; strange voices sound; and the odour of blood and burning is everywhere. We are not surprised that an ancient commentator describes *Revelation* as a book 'which either finds a man mad or leaves him so.'

The apocalyptic of *Revelation* is the apotheosis of unrestrained oriental imagination. Yet, even so, its mythology is anchored to earth, for in mythological guise the Roman Empire as it impinged on Christianity plays a central part. And, yet again, a religious faith essentially independent of any mythological trappings sounds a clear note ever and anon in the song of the angelic choir hymning the over-ruling righteousness of the eternal God.

[6] B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, p. 521.

To-day myths and ideologies are the fashion, and, in a measure, have usurped the place of ideals. There is even some scepticism as to whether it is possible to reach objective truths of history. It is incontestable that the historian, when he has studied all available records and documents, must needs use a sympathetic imagination in his work of reconstructing the past. The sceptic, stressing the rôle of constructive imagination in historical research, is apt to place a question mark after every historical finding. Pilate asked, 'What is truth?' His modern representative asks, 'What is historical truth?' or 'What is factual truth?' He may even press his question to the extreme point of asking, 'What is fact?' It is no business of mine to deal here with such philosophical riddles. I content myself with pointing out a modern tendency to blur the distinction between mythology and history, between myth and fact.

This tendency received a powerful impetus in the sphere of theology through the publication at the beginning of the century of Albert Schweitzer's influential book, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. This quest, pursued by Liberal theologians throughout the nineteenth century with pertinacious zeal, Schweitzer regards as an adventure doomed to failure. It is a modern quest, for according to Schweitzer, early Christianity showed an absolute indifference to the life of the Jesus of history, while at a later stage the Chalcedonian formula of the two natures, though in appearance preserving the rights of history, 'cut off the last possibility of a return to the historic Jesus.'[7]

In Schweitzer's judgment the quest failed. 'There is nothing more negative,' he says, 'than the result of the critical study of the life of Jesus.'[8] In place of the historical Jesus he portrays a Jesus conceived in terms of apocalyptic mythology. With this purpose in mind he draws his material predominantly from *Matthew*, the latest and most apocalyptic of the Synoptic Gospels. A more pedestrian and factual historian would find much valuable material in *Luke*, but this Gospel, which incidentally includes the very non-apocalyptic parables of the Good Samaritan and Prodigal Son, Schweitzer ignores. The key-stone of his structure is *Matthew* x, where Jesus sends the Twelve out on a mission to 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' He treats this section of *Matthew*, which demonstrably is a late conflation, as if it were a verbatim first-hand report taken down by a shorthand writer. The crucial passage is 'Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come.' From these words Schweitzer infers that Jesus at that time expected the immediate end of all things. He interprets

[7] *op. cit.*, p. 3. [8] *op. cit.*, p. 396.

His subsesquent career in the light of the failure of His expectation. Jesus had hurled the fire-brand destined to kindle the fierce trials which were to precede the Last End, and the flame had gone out. The mission of John the Baptist had been to proclaim the near advent of the Kingdom of Heaven.

> 'Soon after that came Jesus,' writes Schweitzer, 'and in the knowledge that He is the coming Son of Man lays hold on the wheel of the world to set it moving on that last revolution which is to bring all history to a close. It refuses to turn, and He throws Himself upon it. Then it does turn; and crushes Him. Instead of bringing in the eschatological conditions, He has destroyed them. The wheel rolls onward, and the mangled body of the one immeasurably great Man, who was strong enough to think of Himself as the spiritual ruler of mankind, and to bend history to His purpose, is hanging upon it still. That is His victory and His reign.'[9]

So Schweitzer portrays Jesus with a brush dipped in the colours of apocalyptic mythology. Is it fanciful to detect also a tinge of Teutonic mythology, to sense something of the atmosphere of the Twilight of the Gods? Though we may strive so to tone it down that it may blend with the picture of One who came 'not to be ministered unto, but to minister,' this picture of 'the one immeasurably great Man, who was strong enough to think of Himself as the spiritual ruler of mankind and to bend history to His purpose,' smacks of a mythology not entirely Hebrew. And we detect the same Teutonic note in Schweitzer's oft-quoted words, 'He was not a teacher, not a casuist; He was an imperious ruler.'[10] Note that word 'imperious.' It is a symptom of the ineradicable, and no less disastrous, addiction of the German mind to the categorical imperative.

Schweitzer's apocalyptic interpretation is very wide-embracing.

> 'What else,' he asks, 'are the Synoptic Gospels, the Pauline letters, the Christian apocalypses than products of Jewish apocalyptic, belonging, moreover, to its greatest and most flourishing period? Historically regarded, the Baptist, Jesus, and Paul are simply the culminating manifestations of Jewish apocalyptic thought'.[11]

Though valuation and reflexion no doubt play a part of varying importance in apocalyptic as in all mythology, apocalyptic may better be described as a product of imagination than as a product of thought. The radical historical scepticism which leads Schweitzer to mock at the quest of the historical Jesus as if it were the pursuit of a will 'o the wisp and to replace the historic Jesus by a construction of the apocalyptic imagination brings him, in principle,

[9] *op. cit.*, pp. 368, 369.
[10] *op. cit.*, p. 401.
[11] *op. cit.*, pp. 365, 366.

very close to those even more radical sceptics who pose the question, to the historian absurd, 'Did Jesus ever live?'

For obvious reasons Schweitzer does not include the Fourth Gospel along with the Synoptics, the Pauline letters, and the Christian apocalypses among his 'products of Jewish apocalyptic.' The Fourth Gospel is so far removed from *Matthew*, the mine from which Schweitzer digs most of his material for his construction of the apocalyptic Jesus, that Dr. Streeter does not think that the Fourth Evangelist could have accepted *Matthew* as having apostolic authority. He not only all but drops the idea of a visible Second Coming of Jesus, substituting for it a coming of the Holy Spirit; he also had no sympathy with the Judaism which colours one of the sources which *Matthew* uses.

> 'Himself convinced that Christ came to supersede the Law and that the Parousia is to be understood spiritually, he could not,' thinks Streeter, 'accept as Apostolic a Gospel conspicuous for Apocalypic and Judaistic sayings.' [12]

The Fourth Gospel represents an attempt to proclaim Jesus to the Gentile world. To Gentiles, Hebrew apocalyptic meant just nothing at all, and in proclaiming his faith to them the Evangelist must needs use a language which they could understand. He found a technique ready to hand. The Jews, whose missionary zeal was so intense that they would move heaven and earth to make one proselyte, had shown the way. They wooed the Gentile world by an allegorical exposition of the Scriptures which transformed them into a vehicle of truths at which, in their view, the great philosophers of antiquity had only guessed. Of this method we know a good deal from the works of Philo of Alexandria, who makes free use of Jewish-Hellenistic apologetic and controversial writings. There is no reason to think that the Fourth Evangelist had direct knowledge of Philo, but there is every reason to believe that he adopted the technique of Jewish propaganda of which we learn much from Philo's writings. The Jewish missionaries clearly made great play with the conception of the Logos. The Fourth Evangelist took this over from them and applied it to Jesus. It is interesting to notice that Philo's Logos is also the Truth, the Light, the Bread from Heaven, the Living Water, the Vine, and the Shepherd.[13]

We cannot reasonably expect from a treatise such as the Fourth Gospel any very substantial information about the Jesus of history. Indeed, in the miracle at the Cana marriage feast the Evangelist incorporates in his narrative a folk-tale which was

[12] B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, p. 416.
[13] W. L. Knox, *Some Hellenistic Elements in Primitive Christianity*, p.44.

heathen in origin, though it may have acquired some vogue in Christian circles in Syria. That he sat very loose to history the modern historian, from his own point of view, may deplore. But the Fourth Evangelist was not a modern historian. Far from it! Yet he was insistent that the Jesus whom he identified with the Logos was a historical figure. It was this which saved him from the Docetism and Gnosticism which dissolve the Jesus of history into a mythological symbol of tenuous speculation. Dr. Wilfred L. Knox, whose book, *Some Hellenistic Elements in Primitive Christianity*, no student of Christian origins can afford to neglect, puts it thus:

> 'The greatness of the Gospel lies in the fact that while it interprets the life of Jesus in terms of the theology of the age, it never loses sight of the concrete historical figure of the synoptic tradition or of love as the distinctive quality of Christianity. There are moments when it comes dangerously near to presenting Jesus as a purely docetic epiphany on the stage of history, but these are always corrected by the evangelist's fidelity to the main Christian tradition.'[14]

Perhaps Dr. Knox would not greatly differ from Origen who, as Dean Inge has recently reminded us, averred that the Fourth Gospel sometimes conveyed spiritual truth in 'what one may call literal falsehood.'[15]

The historian is embarrassed by the gap of over thirty years which separates our earliest Gospel from the events recorded, and by the absence of contemporary evidence. He gets little from Paul, who, unfortunately for him, showed scant interest in 'Christ after the flesh.' It amounts to little more than some valuable evidence about the Resurrection appearances and their nature, and some echoes of the teaching of Jesus. He, however, is able more or less tentatively to dissect out the sources which the Evangelists used, and, so far as he succeeds, to take at any rate one step backward towards the Jesus of history. He is also able by an examination of the way in which two Evangelists used the same source to discover something of the manner in which they treated the material at their disposal. We know from the opening verse of *Luke* that by his time *many* had already 'taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning these matters which have been fulfilled among us.' Professor Creed remarks that 'Luke is speaking of what was a matter of common knowledge. He himself used two, and probably several, written documents in the composition of his own Gospel.'[16] At how early a date such documents were written we do not know.

[14] *op. cit.*, pp. 89, 90.

[15] W. R. Inge, *Origen*, p. 10.

[15] W. R. Inge, *Origen*, p. 10.

[16] J. M. Creed, *The Gospel according to St. Luke*, p. 3.

But we do know that there were many of them and that they were known to the author of *Luke*. Jesus: Myth or History? Surely the most summary examination of the Gospels and the most cursory consideration of the acknowledged fact that behind them lay further written documents provide an irrefutable answer.

In estimating the historical value of our records it behoves us to bear in mind a consideration which Professor Creed adduces.

> 'The probable extent of the contribution of individual memories,' he urges, 'should not be estimated too low. During the first generation after the Crucifixion there must have been a not inconsiderable number of persons in the churches who had themselves seen and heard the Lord. Pre-eminent among them would be the apostle Peter himself. Their personal recollections would be especially valued, and their presence in the community would be a check on the development of tradition.'[17]

How real and effective was that check is demonstrated by the wild proliferation of legend in the apocryphal Gospels when it was removed.

What then of Karl Marx's rather question-begging phrase, 'the earthly core of the misty creations of religion'? We have made full allowance for the influence of eschatological mythology; we have admitted the uncertainties involved in the absence of contemporary records of the Jesus of history. Let us also admit that the age was credulous, and that stories of miracles were readily told and believed about great and outstanding figures. We have no right to demand belief in the incredible. Anyway, if we did, we shouldn't get it. But there are some fanatics of secularism who hold that at the core of myth is just myth — nothing else. Apparently there are some in the secularist underworld who take this thesis seriously. Otherwise the Rationalist Press Association would not continue to issue books purporting to demonstrate that Jesus never existed. Why should we trouble ourselves with this kind of thing?

I remember, some years ago, asking an economist why economists did not devote more attention to the Douglas Social Credit theory which, at the time, had a considerable vogue. He answered, 'For the same reason that theologians don't devote more attention to the British-Israelite theory. We haven't the time to waste.' But many people, including clergymen, have been fervent believers in Mr. Douglas' theory, and some of these clergymen are not unintelligent. The British-Israelite theory, again, seems to have a strong attraction for retired colonels, though, in view of the high competence shown by our Army officers in the recent war, he would be a bold man who denied intelligence to retired colonels as a class.

[17] *ibid.*, p. liv.

The fact is that a good clergyman may be a bad economist, and a capable Army officer may be utterly at sea in matters of history, the easy prey, in fact, of any plausible charlatan. In the same way it may be that among people, who in other respects are reasonably intelligent, there are some who are vulnerable to the propagandists of the Christ-Myth theory. Otherwise the Rationalist Press Association would hardly find a market for its wares.

Professor H. G. Wood has done these people and the cause of truth a real service by writing a book, *Did Christ Really Live?*, in which he examines the Christ-Myth theory and exposes its absurdities. He appropriately dedicates it 'to the blind leaders of the blind in the hope that both may open their eyes.' He guides his reader through a strange kaleidoscopic world of empty conjecture and insubstantial assumption. I have recently myself spent many hours in that shadowy world, pursuing its denizens from India to Persia, from Persia to Greece, and heaven knows where else. It was a real relief to emerge into the clear air of common sense, and one's humane feelings are gratified that it is not necessary to invite the Conference to enter it. One or two examples will amply suffice to demonstrate its futility. They are quite typical.

The high priest of the Christ-Myth is Mr. J. M. Robertson, a scholar of immense and varied learning but strangely erratic judgment. Perhaps his learning may impress the man in the street who confounds knowledge with judgment. Let us see how he deals with the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, an event which he is compelled by his basic assumption to regard as mythical. He seizes on St. Matthew's statement that two animals were involved, an ass and a colt. Why two? He has a double answer. In one of the Greek signs of Cancer, Dionysus rides on an ass and a foal. If that does not satisfy you, he can produce from his store of learning yet another Greek legend, that of Bacchus riding on two asses across a marsh. And, hey presto, Jesus is relegated to the mythical world of Bacchus and Dionysus! That is how the trick is done. But if you demur that in *Mark* and *Luke* only one animal figures in the incident, that does not in the least perturb Mr. Robertson. Yes, he replies, it is true that in the other Gospels the two asses '*become* one.' Of course he has got it the wrong way round, for *Matthew* is secondary to *Mark*. The truth is that in *Matthew Mark's* one animal becomes two animals, and for an obvious reason. *Matthew*, misunderstanding the parallelism characteristic of Hebrew poetry, has been misled by a passage in *Zechariah* which he thinks refers to two animals, whereas it refers to one only. When you enter the realm of the Christ-Myth you have, like Alice, passed through the looking-glass and must expect everything to

be topsy-turvy. Dr. Conybeare in his comments on Robertson's treatment of the entry into Jersalem diagnoses the fallacy which runs right through the arguments of the exponents of the Christ-Myth:

> 'But did Hebrews,' he asks, 'in everyday life mould their ideas of promised Messiah on out-of-the-way legends of Bacchus? Were they likely to fashion a tale of a Messianic trumph out of Gentile myths? Do we not know from a hundred sources that the Jews of that age, and the Christians who were in this matter their pupils, abhorred everything that savoured of Paganism? They were the last people in the world to construct a life of the Messiah out of the myths of Bacchus, and Hermes, and Osiris, and Heracles, and the fifty other heathen gods and heroes whom Mr. Robertson rolls up into what he calls the "composite myth" of the Gospels.' [18]

We might leave it at this and be content to dismiss the Christ-Myth theory as the monstrous offspring of mythology gone mad, a paradox of the irrationalism of rationalists. But let us glance just once more at this strange world which lies the other side of the looking-glass. The Gospels give accounts of the Passion of Jesus with circumstantial details which suggest that here we have a historical narrative. Not so, reply the supporters of the Christ-Myth theory. They take us by the hand and lead us back across the centuries to a dim antiquity where they point to a figure bearing the name of Joshua. They then tell us that Jesus is but another form of the name Joshua. 'But,' we say, in some perplexity, 'we know all about Joshua. He was a Hebrew tribal leader.' 'Not at all,' comes the prompt reply; 'he was a Sun-god.' And then they adduce from different races and ages examples of the cult of a Sun-god who dies annually. If we obtusely fail to see what all this has to do with the Passion of Jesus, they reply that it ought to be clear to the meanest intelligence that in the Passion narratives we have transcripts of a mystery play which was performed by members of a Jewish sect in connection with a cultus of the dying Sun-god, Joshua or Jesus. Mr. Robertson informs us that this mystery play, once performed annually in Alexandria, was later transferred to Jerusalem. It may strike us as strange that Pilate, Herod, Annas and Caiaphas are characters in a play of such a kind and with such a history. As we turn away from this realm of fantasy it behoves us to ponder the fact that there are many who pride themselves on their rationality and enlightenment and yet gulp down the kind of fare provided by Mr. Robertson and his disciples.

Yet it is true that the mythopeic faculty is ineradicable from the human make-up. So long as man possesses and exercises the power of creative imagination, myth will have its place in religion.

[18] F. C. Conybeare, *The Historical Christ*, p. 25.

The important thing is that we should insist on the distinction between myth and actuality. Doubtless in primitive times when the imagination was dominant and reason but secondary mythology developed in rank luxuriance. Yet even to-day the poet has a rightful place by the side of the pundit. Religion would be sadly impoverished if it were reduced to a catalogue of historical facts and theological propositions. Who would desire that all the mythical elements should be sternly expunged from either the Old or the New Testament? Nevertheless it is the part of honesty to recognize myth for what it is, and, in the words of the old historian, to be scrupulous 'to proclaim certainties as certain, falsehoods as false, and uncertainties as dubious.'

JESUS—'ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES'

By the Rev. D. L. Scott, B.A.

THE title of my paper is 'Jesus, "According to the Scriptures," ' and I had better begin by explaining what its object is. Briefly, it is to indicate how far the influence of the Old Testament scriptures has affected the historic presentation of Jesus in the New Testament. The general problem of the historical character of our Lord has already been offered to our consideration. We are now to investigate a particular aspect of that problem in greater detail.

One of the theories held by adherents to the Christ-Myth school, in support of their proposition that Jesus never lived at all, is that the whole concept of Him was drawn by the original founders of Christianity from passages in the Old Testament which they interpreted in a messianic sense. None of us, I take it, would find ourselves in agreement with that extreme point of view. But at the same time we can scarcely deny that the idea which His earliest disciples formed of Jesus, and the portrait of Him which they have bequeathed to us, are not the result of historic facts alone. History in both of them is blended with *a priori* notions which the Old Testament scriptures, especially the *Psalms* and parts of *Isaiah*, have supplied. We have to consider, therefore, what the bearing of this admixture is upon our own idea of Jesus to-day, and upon the portrait of Him which we are endeavouring to obtain.

Throughout the New Testament, Jesus is identified with the Messiah of Jewish prophecy and expectation. There are two

reasons why as a result of this its presentation of Him has been influenced by the scriptures of the older dispensation. In the first place it was assumed that the accepted messianic prophecies (*i.e.* those passages in the Old Testament which according to the current exegesis had reference to the Messiah) had actually been fulfilled in Jesus; and secondly, for any important events in His life which were not apparently the fulfilment of such predictions, it was felt that *some* prophetic foreshadowing had to be discovered. In other words, because Jesus was the Messiah, it was regarded as axiomatic that all that He had done was foretold in the Scriptures, and that all that was foretold in the Scriptures of the Messiah had in fact been done by Him.

The natural conclusion to be drawn from this is that the accounts of Jesus which we read in the New Testament will not be a purely factual record. Instead we must expect to find that in some cases the facts have been modified in order to make them agree more closely with supposed Old Testament references to them: that in other cases narratives have even been introduced for this reason which have no factual basis at all. Finally we must not be surprised if the whole of the Gospel story has been coloured by this tendency.

It is by no means easy for us at the present day to realize how this might be the case. It seems incredible that facts could receive such free treatment at the hands of honest and responsible men. But our own outlook is rarely so objective as we like to imagine. We are all subject in varying degrees to prejudice and preconceptions; we all prefer deductive to inductive reasoning, and interpret facts less in accordance with their particular merits than in accordance with the general theories which we may happen to favour. To a great extent it would be impossible to do otherwise, and therefore we should not blame the writers of the New Testament too severely. We must constantly remember in what extreme veneration the Old Testament was held by them; their belief in its verbal inspiration was unquestioned, however extravagant their interpretation of it might be. Professor Burkitt has stated that the authority of the Old Testament was such for the pious Jew that he regarded its prophecies as having almost the same validity as the laws of nature have for us. He looked for their fulfilment as surely as we look for the operation of the law of gravity. This granted, its effect upon the presentation of Jesus in the New Testament, when once the identification between Him and the Messiah had been made, became inevitable.

'Christ died for our sins,' said St. Paul, '*according to the scriptures* . . . He arose again the third day, *according to the scrip-*

tures' (I *Cor.* xv). They are, of course, the Old Testament scriptures that the Apostle has in mind. Hence the title of this paper. St. Paul's words have been incorporated into the Nicene Creed—'On the third day he rose again, according to the scriptures'; though doubtless it is seldom realized that the allusion there is to the Psalms and Prophets rather than to the Gospels. Thus the celebrated 'argument from prophecy' has its place in that historic creed. That this was indeed a chief part of the earliest Christian apologetics, the *Acts of the Apostles*, as well as St. Paul's Epistles, clearly shews (*Acts* ii, 14-36; iv, 11, 27 f; viii, 35; xiii, 32 ff, etc.). The sufferings of the Messiah, the scandal of the Cross, had to be explained and justified; and to those who regarded the Old Testament prophecy as though it had the validity of natural law, there lay the one convincing argument ready to hand!

Let us then try to ascertain what effect it has had upon the Gospels themselves. According to Dr. E. C. Selwyn, 'The four gospels contain a hundred passages of Old Testament which are treated as fulfilled in the events which they relate' (*Oracles in the New Testament*, p. 2). It would be foolish, however, to conclude from this too readily that all the passages in which these instances occur are historically suspect and have been created or at least re-written for apologetic purposes. But at the same time it would be scarcely credible that neither of these tendencies should betray themselves in any of them, when we remember that for the Gospel writers the Scriptures contained infallible predictions of the events about which they themselves were writing. Plainly if one of these supposed predictions should conflict with the explicit testimony of an eye-witness, the former was to be preferred, since the choice lay between the infallible word of God and the fallible declaration of man. St. Matthew provides an obvious example of this in his account of the Triumphal Entry. Jesus, he tells us, rode into Jerusalem not upon one donkey, but upon two! (*Matt.* xxi, 7). The reason is that he has misunderstood the prophecy of Zechariah to which the Triumphal Entry is related. The prophet had written, 'Behold, thy king cometh unto thee . . . riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass' (*Zec.* iv, 9). The evangelist, however, has mistaken '*even* upon a colt' for '*and* upon a colt,' and accordingly he duplicates the animals concerned notwithstanding the absurdity which it causes. This is admittedly an extreme example, but it illustrates the veneration in which the prophetic scriptures were held.

It is, of course, upon St. Matthew's Gospel that the influence of the Old Testament is especially apparent. 'That it might be

fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets' is the writer's continual refrain. But from none of the other Gospels is that influence absent. Therefore if we can form any conclusions about the effect which it has had upon the First Gospel, we shall be able to estimate its effect upon the other three, or at any rate upon Mark and Luke; and it is, of course, within the limits of the Synoptic record that our 'quest for the historical Jesus' must be largely confined.

The first thing which the reader must notice is how every circumstance of Christ's infancy is related by St. Matthew to the Old Testament scriptures. The virgin birth, the birth at Bethlehem, the flight into Egypt, the massacre of the Innocents, the return to Nazareth, are all coupled with prophetic utterances, and in each case we are told that the particular event occurred as the direct fulfilment of one or other of them. But, as we are well aware, the historicity of all these Infancy Narratives is seriously questioned. To examine the grounds for this would be impossible within the limits of my paper, and the arguments by which they are challenged and defended are after all sufficiently familiar. Perhaps I shall not seem unduly dogmatic, therefore, if I say that in my own opinion their authenticity as the records of actual fact is gravely to be doubted, and if I proceed on that assumption.

At the same time my doubts in no way arise from the mere fact that all these incidents are related as the explicit fulfilments of prophecy. Some very remarkable predictions do occasionally come true whether they are to be accounted for as simple coincidences or as —

> ' . . . such refraction of events
> As often rises ere they rise.'

The real test has to be made upon the grounds of historical and literary criticism, and it is that test which I do not think that the Infancy Narratives, especially those of St. Matthew, can sustain. Now if that is once granted, there must have been *some* motive which caused these stories to originate, and the fulfilment of prophecy certainly appears to be the one that is most easily understood. It is a reasonable conclusion, therefore, that the story of the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem and the miraculous circumstances attending it do owe a good deal to the Old Testament prophecies which they are alleged to fulfil.[1] At the same time it is to be noticed that this conclusion is not drawn simply because of the intrinsic improbability of the predictions being so remarkably fulfilled; it is drawn because on other grounds as well their authenticity may be questioned.

[1] i.e. *Isaiah* vii, 14; *Micah* v, 2.

Nevertheless, that the opening chapters of St. Matthew should hus appear to comprise a series of doubtful legends woven around ertain texts in the Old Testament scriptures is by no means re-ssuring. One could not be surprised after this beginning if it vere found that the writer continued throughout in the same ashion, although it would then be gravely improbable that Jesus ad been an historic personage at all. But in fact what *is* surprising s the difference between the narratives of Christ's infancy and the est of the Gospel story as a whole.

Even from a superficial standpoint the difference is fairly ob-ious. Once the account of our Lord's ministry is begun, the refer-nces to Old Testament prophecy become more incidental in their elation to the narrative and decidedly fewer in number. Thus, n St. Matthew's Gospel, there are no less than five instances in he first two chapters where some prophetic scripture is alleged o have been fulfilled. But beginning with the account of John the Baptist in the third chapter, we have to go to the end of chapter hirteen before discovering five more of these alleged fulfilments, xcluding those which are placed on the lips of Jesus Himself, and f these there are only two.

This is a fact which surely demands to be explained — why in hose two chapters relating to the Infancy Narratives the number f alleged prophetic fulfilments is nearly six times as great as it is n the next eleven chapters, and its explanation can hardly be nconnected with the difference already noted between them. That lifference is a difference in their relative historical value, for on he same grounds upon which the historicity of the Infancy Nar-atives must be seriously questioned, the substantial reliability f the succeeding narrative may be affirmed with much confidence.

Now it would seem to follow from this that the story of Jesus s dependent upon the scriptures of the Old Testament in inverse roportion to its historical trustworthiness. Where it is historical, ittle reference is made to the fulfilment of Old Testament pre-lictions, whether supposed or real. But where it is less historical, he number of these references increases sharply. We could there-or construct a general theory along these lines to account for the acts which have so far been noticed, but it would not have to be ressed too far. It has to be remembered that in each case where ome Old Testament scripture is said to be fulfilled, it has to be udged upon its own merits, its authenticity must be considered ndependently, and for each one a separate decision has to be made whether it is an example of actual fulfilment or only of the un-istorical use of scripture made by the evangelist.

Applied to the Infancy Narratives, however, the theory suggested offers a reasonable explanation of their present existence and context. In the first place it is to be presumed that little or nothing was actually known of our Saviour's early childhood. That being so, the growth of legends centering upon it was only to be expected. But the Infancy Narratives preserved for us in the Gospels are not ordinary legends developed in a haphazard or purely imaginative way. They are constructed upon a definite basis of prophetic scriptures, scriptures which, it was believed, were directly and unerringly related to the events with which the evangelists (or their sources) were themselves concerned. Hence it was natural that they should rely entirely upon the Old Testament oracles for that part of their story where the record of eye-witnesses was non-existent and the record of the prophets was so peculiarly explicit. Did it not stand written that a virgin should conceive and bear a son, and that his name should be called Immanuel? Did it not stand written that out of Bethlehem should come forth a ruler 'whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting'?

It is not wonderful that an account of Christ's childhood should have been woven round these and other prophecies. It is much more remarkable that there should be no such obvious intrusion of prophecy into the later parts of the Gospel narrative which depend much more evidently upon a basis of actual events. The instance where the influence of prophecy leads St. Matthew to duplicate the ass upon which Jesus rode to Jerusalem is really quite exceptional. Generally speaking it does not appear to be true that even St. Matthew bases his narrative upon prophecy except where no other basis for it exists.

Now this reticence on the part of the evangelists and their apparent unwillingness to deviate from plain historic fact is something the truth and importance of which is not sufficiently recognized. There can be no question about what their own beliefs upon the subject of Old Testament Prophecy actually were, neither can it be doubted that they were entirely convinced that Jesus was in fact the Messiah whose coming the Old Testament was supposed to foretell. But those critics who have interpreted the Gospels solely in the light of these presuppositions have been guilty of *a priori* reasoning to a much greater extent than the Gospel-writers themselves. Their general fidelity to the actual facts with which they were concerned is ably defended by Professor Bowman in his recent book, *The Intention of Jesus*. Thus in the narrative sections of the Gospels, the writers speak of Jesus far more frequently as prophet, healer or teacher, than as Messiah or Son of God. The

ratio in fact is fifty-eight to fifteen. And yet, as the Professor points out:

> 'By the time our Gospels appeared, a Son of God, Messiah Christology, was definitely in existence . . . The restraint of the Evangelists is, therefore, the more impressive in permitting the narrative sections of their sources to proceed with so little stress upon this item' (p. 120).

Evidently they were at pains to write about Jesus, not as they thought of Him, but as He had been thought of and spoken of in His own day. Still more remarkable is the restricted use they make of the title 'Son of Man.' This appears some thirty-one times in all four Gospels upon the lips of Jesus, but *never* anywhere else. There seems no room for doubt that this was the name by which our Lord called Himself; it is used by the evangelists as His self-designation and in no other way, surely a striking testimony to their genuine desire for historical accuracy. Similarly in regard to the Virign Birth which we have just been considering, Professor Bowman writes:

> 'It was the Church which added these mundane traditions to its Gospels; but it had the spiritual discernment to refrain from allowing them to obtrude upon the narratives of Jesus' ministry, as though they had influenced any to see in Him the Messiah of God' (op cit., p. 161).

These considerations go a fair distance towards establishing the substantial reliability of the Synoptic account of the ministry. But when we are confronted by the Passion narrative, what is one to say then? Its dependence in all four Gospels on the Old Testament scriptures is obvious, but it is equally obvious that it cannot be detached from the story of Jesus as a whole, in the same way that the infancy narratives can. If it should prove to be largely unhistorical and the result of the influence of prophecy upon the minds of its authors, then the historicity of the narrative preceding it would be affected as well.

And yet I dare say that every critically-minded person has sometimes wondered whether the whole story of the Passion with its constant references to the *Psalms* and *Deutero-Isaiah* is not simply an ideal picture of innocent suffering, after the same manner as the Suffering Servant or the good man who is tortured and put to death in Plato's *Republic*. Nevertheless, it is really just as difficult to suppose that the record of our Lord's sufferings is not substantially true as it is to doubt the record of His life and teaching; and it is, after all, scarcely necessary to go to such extremes in order to account for the predominance of Old Testament prophecy in this section of the Gospels. The really surprising thing is not the use which the Evangelists made of it, but the extraordinary aptness of so much of the ancient scriptures to

the events with which they were themselves concerned. No one, surely, writing of those events and being at the same time familiar with the Old Testament could avoid introducing its language and phraseology into what they had to tell. And we have besides this to remember that it was the death of Jesus — the killing of the Messiah — that the primitive Church found hardest of all to understand and explain. Faced with such a difficulty nothing could be more natural than to try and shew that the whole thing had been foreshadowed in the Scriptures. But that it should have been *created* out of that foreshadowing is beyond the bounds of reasonable possibility.

Another thing to be remembered is this. Our Lord's disciples would probably know little of the details of His Passion, following the arrest in Gethsemane, since at that point 'they all left him and fled' (*Mark* xiv, 50). Hence to some extent at least they would be dependent for the rest on conjecture, as in the case of His childhood. So when the story came to be told and later on to be written down, 'What saith the Scripture?' would be the solution that at once presented itself to them. How far the details are in fact historical or unhistorical is not of great importance. Jesus at His trial *may* have kept silence so that Pilate marvelled, or it may be that this is simply a deduction from *Isaiah* 53, 'Yea, he opened not his mouth.' Similarly the crucifixion of the two malefactors may have no other basis than verse nine of that same chapter — 'They made his grave with the wicked'; whilst the succeeding phrase, 'and with the rich in his death,' may be the reason why St. Matthew informs us that Joseph of Arimathea was rich (*Matt.* xxvii, 57).

On the other hand, even this degree of scepticism is hardly necessary. The behaviour attributed to Jesus at His trial is exactly what one would have expected of Him; it is likely that other criminals would be put to death at the same time as He; and Joseph must have been a man of wealth in any case. In the same way the soldiers may very well have parted our Lord's garments amongst them and cast lots for His vesture, although the psalmist describes an exactly similar experience of his own. We should not doubt the occurrence of an event to-day because it could be paralleled by some incident in Shakespeare. Very different, on the other hand, is the muddled account which St. Matthew gives of the suicide of Judas and the buying of the Potter's Field. That the story has been modified in favour of the scripture which St. Matthew quotes from *Zechariah* and wrongly attributes to *Jeremiah* is fairly obvious. But the very fact that such a passage stands out

is peculiar is a definite testimony to the authentic character of the est generally.

The conclusion to which we are tending is, therefore, that the esus of the Gospel story is substantially the Jesus of history rather han Jesus according to the Scriptures. The influence of scripture ipon the Evangelists' presentation of Him is decidedly less than night have been expected. In that presentation they evidently ried hard to be faithful to history and to give an impression of esus as He had really appeared upon earth. In points of detail, owever, they treated their sources with less respect, as can be seen from the respective treatment of *Mark* by *Luke* and *Matthew*; nd where no sources existed, then they do seem to have relied rankly upon the Scriptures.

Of course, it was only to be expected that they should introduce llusions to Scripture as often as possible and give to what they wrote an Old Testament flavour, but the importance of this tendency can, I think, easily be overrated and imagined to be indicative of something more far-reaching than is actually the case. I believe it is quite a mistake to suppose that it points to a much deeper dependence upon the Old Testament than meets the eye.

But how far, it may still be asked, did the influence of the Old Testament upon the Evangelists affect their accounts of the *teaching* that Jesus gave? How far have their records of what He said been coloured by what the Scriptures were understood to say of Him? Did He in fact say, for example, that He had come to give His life a ransom for many, or that His blood was shed for many unto remission of sins? Such questions have to be decided individually, and each must decide for himself. But we have argued that the figure of Jesus within the Gospel pages is in the main historic and that largely because of the self-consistency which it displays. We have to learn from a study of the Gospels the elements whereof that self-consistency is composed. Whatever sayings or actions have a tendency towards its decomposition must be regarded with suspicion.

The general answer, however, to this question of Old Testament influence upon the sayings of Jesus, as they have been recorded, must also depend on the Old Testament influence upon Himself. The 'Messianic Consciousness' of Jesus is the subject of another paper, but that He had such a consciousness in some form or other seems to me to be almost beyond dispute. Professor Bowman, to whom I have already referred, argues persuasively that the real genius and originality of our Lord lay in the very fact that He brought together in Himself the noblest messianic ideas of the prophets and the Suffering Servant idea of Deutero-Isaiah.

> 'Originality,' he observes, 'always builds upon the best that the past has to offer, because it sees and evaluates that best at its true worth' (op. cit., p. 74).

That Jesus was deliberately fulfilling scripture in His triumphal ride to Jerusalem is perfectly clear, and therefore He may quite well have said on the night before His death, 'The Scriptures must be fulfilled.' That He did to some extent share the current ideas on the subject of prophecy is not improbable, just as He accepted the Davidic authorship of the *Psalms*. If so we have still further reason for the influence of prophecy upon those who wrote about Him.

The results of our present investigation may not seem very large in their extent, but unless the conclusions arrived at are in the main correct, the remainder of our Conference would be to small purpose. For if the historic Jesus is not to be found within the Gospels, we shall not find Him elsewhere; and if we cannot find Him — the Man of Galilee — whatever else we find, or whatever substitutes we may be offered for Him, they will all be of little moment. My contention is that we can discern His features within the pages of the Gospel, and moreover that they are less thickly overlaid with secondary material than we might have feared, or even expected. Rather, I think, there is just sufficient of this to make it necessary for the Gospels to be examined with the utmost care. We cannot simply take for granted the figure of Jesus as it appears upon the surface of them, but we can discover something at least of the real nature of that figure by penetrating investigation.

On a similar topic to that which has been before us this morning, Dr. Major has written as follows in *The Gospel of Freedom*, and with his words I will conclude:

> 'In our Scriptural records of our Lord's teaching there may be difficulties of interpretation arising from inaccurate or imperfect reports, consciously or unconsciously coloured by the limitations of the evangelists; there may even be in them misleading additions to, and mistaken paraphrases of, Christ's words, and even acts attributed to Him which were not His. If this be so . . . it may even throw it into clearer light that the personality and teaching of Christ are for human beings the highest and final revelation of God and duty' (p. 133).

THE SYNOPTIC PROBLEM

METHODS AND RESULTS

By the Ven. Archdeacon Buckley, M.A., author of *Introduction to the Synoptic Problem.*

WE naturally ask, is there any external evidence which will help us to decide how and by whom these Gospels were written?

Unfortunately such evidence as there is is scanty and unreliable. The oft-quoted statement of Papias about *Mark* is only third-hand evidence; what somebody told him the elder John said, and his description of that Gospel as not written in order is not justified by the facts. Whatever you may think of Mark's chronology he clearly intended to arrange his matter in chronological order, as is proved by his use of such phases as 'on that day,' 'in those days,' 'after six days.' Certainly a tradition was current in the second century that to some extent the authority of Peter was behind Mark's Gospel, but whether this tradition had a basis in fact or was merely an inference from the mention of Mark in *I Peter* we cannot tell.

Critics in the past have, I think, attached too much weight to Papias' statement, and it has tended to hinder rather than help them, just as they have tended to underrate the importance of Luke's statement that 'Many had taken in hand' to do what he was doing, *i.e.* to write a gospel.

It is well to remember that *Matthew*, *Mark* and *Luke* are only the survivors of a larger gospel literature most of the rest of which has perished.

There are certain things which the critic must always bear in mind — when he assumes the use of written sources.

(1) When in two documents both the wording and the context are similar, either one must be copied from the other, or both must be copied from the same document or documents derived from a common source.

(2) When the wording is similar but the context is different we cannot be confident that the same document has been used.

(3) When it seems probable that one of the gospels is copying another, *e.g.* when *Matthew* is copying *Mark*, and the later writer gives details not found in the earlier, the use of a second source is indicated.

(4) Documents which no longer exist probably contained much

that is found in the documents which have survived, so that there would have been a good deal of overlapping.

(5) We must remember that the Evangelists were not wholly dependent on the documents they used. They must have possessed some knowledge of the events of the life of Christ and of his teaching, *i.e.* we must allow for the influence of oral tradition.

(6) If two Evangelists give a saying of Jesus of which the meaning is the same but the wording different, we should be slow to assume that either of them is arbitrarily altering the wording of his source, unless the verbal alterations are in harmony with the style of the author as seen in other passages in his Gospel.

(7) We must remember that we have not the original autographs and that even our best MSS. may in many details differ considerably from them.

There are two theories which have recently attracted a good deal of attention.

1. *That our Gospels are translations of Aramaic originals.* My reasons for doubting the validity of this theory are :

(*a*) There is no external evidence for the existence of such documents, for the *Logia*, which Papias on the authority of John the Elder says were written by Matthew in Hebrew, were most probably a collection of Old Testament excerpts.

(*b*) The Latin words and constructions found in *Mark* might with equal plausibility suggest that *Mark* was originally written in Latin.

(*c*) I am no Aramaic scholar, so to test Torrey's methods I tried to see whether a case could not be made out for supposing that Shakespeare (who as the French scenes in *Henry V* show knew some French) translated the 'to be or not to be speech' in *Hamlet* from a French original. I will give but one instance of the kind of thing I discovered ; in 'to take arms against a sea of troubles' ; the French word '*amas*' can mean either a mass of water or a mob. Surely it is more reasonable to take arms against a mob than against a sea, so Shakespeare here mistranslated the original. This, and similar arguments, of course, do not prove that Shakespeare was translating from the French, but they do make me a little distrustful of methods which can with a little ingenuity be made to lead to such a ludicrous conclusion.

2. *Form Criticism.* This, if I rightly understand it, means that the stories of what Jesus said and did were composed in certain stereotyped forms as separate and detached units, presumably by Christian teachers, and were probably committed to writing as separate units before the Gospels were written. Now granting that this theory is right, we still have no proof of where or by whom

this teaching was first committed to writing, but I suggest that it may have been done at quite an early date by Greek-speaking Christians, who made memoranda of the teaching they had received for their own use and were not writing books for other people to read.

With the doubts expressed by some form critics about the historical accuracy of what the teachers taught we are not at present concerned. The problem immediately before us is on what sources were the Gospels based and not were those sources trustworthy.

We turn then to the Gospels themselves, and it is obvious that there is a considerable amount of matter common to all three. To discover why this is so we have to examine this matter paragraph by paragraph, line by line, word by word. The first fact that emerges is that between them *Matthew* and *Luke* reproduce by far the greater part of the matter contained in *Mark*. Secondly, that generally they reproduce it in the same order as *Mark*, and that where *Matthew* deserts *Mark's* order *Luke* supports it, and *vice-versa*. Thirdly, that though they often condense *Mark's* narrative and make verbal alterations they usually reproduce a considerable amount of *Mark's* actual words. From these facts we infer that both *Matthew* and *Luke* made use of *Mark*; this is, I believe, as certain as any such inference can be.

What, however, is not certain is that *Mark* was the only source in which they found some of the matter which they have in common with it. There are a large number of places in which *Matthew* and *Luke* make the same alterations in *Mark's* wording. Sanday suggested that *Matthew* and *Luke* used a different recension of *Mark's* text from that from which all extant texts of *Mark* are derived.

This may be the true explanation of those agreements of *Matthew* and *Luke* against *Mark* which cannot be regarded as merely coincidences. But that *Luke* had a source which in some places overlapped *Mark* is clear; he had a narrative of the Passion and accounts of the call of Peter, of the rejection of Christ at Nazareth, and of the anointing of Christ by a woman. It seems equally clear that *Matthew* did not know or at any rate use this source. Is there any reason to think that *Matthew* also had another source which *Luke* did not use? I believe that there is.

1. After Peter's confession of faith at Caesarea Phillipi, 'thou art the Christ the Son of the living God,' *Matthew* goes on, 'Jesus answering said to him, Blessed art thou Simon Barjona because flesh and blood did not reveal it to you but my father which is in heaven.' These words surely imply that the source from which they were taken must also have contained Peter's confession of

faith, and the fact that *Matthew* adds 'Son of the living God' after 'the Christ' is a further indication of the use of another source.

2. In the passage about the Syrophoenician woman whom *Matthew* calls a Canaanite there is so much that is not in *Mark* that the use of a second source by *Matthew* seems clear.

Again we notice that while from the beginning of chapter xii onwards *Matthew* (with one small exception) follows the order of *Mark*, in chapters viii to x he places a number of episodes — the stilling of the tempest, the Gaderene swine, Jairus' daughter, the sending out of the disciples, which are found in chapters iv to vi of *Mark* — before episodes related in the second and third chapters of *Mark*. I have never seen a convincing explanation of Matthew's reason for here deserting the order of *Mark*, but cannot help wondering whether the use of another source may not have been the reason, especially as in his account of the stilling of the storm Matthew's wording differs considerably from Mark's.

It appears then that though *Matthew* and *Luke* both used *Mark* as a source they both possessed some other source or sources which related some of the same events as *Mark* did.

We must now turn to those portions of *Matthew* and *Luke*, not drawn from *Mark*, which resemble one another more or less closely in the two Gospels.

Here we must bear in mind the distinction between a document and a source. Two more or less similar passages may come ultimately from the same source, but are not necessarily therefore copied from the same document. A modern instance will show clearly what I mean. In Hogben's edition of Keats, *La belle dame sans merci* begins 'O what can ail thee, wretched wight'; in Quiller Couch's *Oxford Book of English Verse* it begins 'O what can ail thee, knight at arms'; from which we conclude that the poem in these two books, though coming from the same source ultimately, does not come from the same document.

Now when we examine such a passage as that in the Sermon on the Mount beginning 'Be not anxious for your life what ye shall eat nor for your bodies what ye shall put on,' and its parallel in *Luke*, the run of the passage as a whole and the numerous verbal agreements show that it came from the same source, but there are a number of verbal differences which make it impossible to affirm with confidence that *Matthew* and *Luke* are here using the same document.

There are I reckon fifteen passages (amounting to 63 verses in *Matthew* and 65 in *Luke*) where the resemblance between the two Gospels are very striking, but only in one, the Baptist's teaching of repentance (three verses), are they absolutely the same word for

word. These passages do not occur in the same order in the two Gospels.

There are twenty-eight other passages, only ten of which consist of more than two verses, which, although they show a certain amount of verbal agreement, do not agree as closely as the fifteen mentioned above. There are twenty more in which, though the subject-matter is the same, the wording is so different as to render it almost impossible to believe that the two Evangelists can have drawn them from the same document.

Most of this matter common to *Matthew* and *Luke* consists of sayings of Jesus, so the question of whence it was derived is complicated by the fact that in Clement of Rome, Polycarp, and Justin Martyr some of the sayings recorded in *Matthew* and *Luke* are found in different form. There is in Clement of Rome a group of seven sayings introduced by a formula similar to that by which the saying 'it is more blessed to give than to receive' is introduced in *Acts*. Six of these seem to be quite independent of the Canonical Gospels, although sayings of similar import may be found there. Two of Clement's group of sayings are found also in Polycarp.

Justin Martyr has a large number of sayings of Jesus, some of which seem to be quotations from the Canonical Gospels, while others equally clearly seem to be drawn from another source, *e.g.* in *I Apology* xv there is a group of sayings more or less parallel to four passages in different parts of *Matthew*; but Justin's method of quoting shows that he found these sayings grouped together in the document he is quoting. When he is giving several quotations taken from different contexts he always separates them by 'and' (as does the writer of *Hebrews*) or by some such expression as 'and in other words.' In the group I have spoken of there are no 'ands'; but, and this is significant, he separates this group from another similar group which follows by the word 'and.'

A long and careful study of Justin's quotations convinces me that when they differ, as they often do, from their parallels in *Matthew* and *Luke* it is because he is quoting from another document, probably a lost Gospel, more familiar to him than the Canonical Gospels, just as you and I may quote the *Psalms* from the Prayer Book rather than from the Authorized Version

The conclusion to which these facts have led me is a negative one—*viz.* that it is not possible with the evidence at our disposal to reconstruct the documents from which *Matthew* and *Luke* derived the non-Marcan portions of their Gospels which they have in common. No doubt much of it goes back to the same source or sources, but it does not seem probable that they derived their information, as a rule, from the same documents.

The Sermon on the Plain throws much light on the subject. Like the Sermon on the Mount it begins with beatitudes, contains sayings on loving one's enemies, on judging, on the tree and its fruits, and on hearer and doer of the word. It is followed immediately by the healing of the centurion's servant, which in *Matthew* is separated from the Sermon on the Mount by the healing of the leper. On the other hand, there is really close agreement in wording only in three passages : (1) the blind leading the blind, (2) the mote and the beam, (3) the good man bringing forth good things. The first and third of these are found in *Matthew*, not in the Sermon on the Mount, but in another part of his Gospel. *Luke's* beatitudes differ considerably from *Matthew's*; he has the woes which *Matthew* has not, and in the other passages his wording and *Matthew's* differ considerably. It seems clear, then, that both are not derived directly from the same written sources, but the similarity of outline shows that there is some sort of connection between them.

Of all possible solutions of the problem which the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Plain present the least probable seems to be that both Evangelists had the same document before them and that one or both of them altered it in an arbitrary fashion.

We must next consider *the proto-Luke theory*. This is that *Luke* did not, as *Matthew* appears to have done, use *Mark* as the groundwork of his Gospel and insert matter taken from another document or source, but that the groundwork of his Gospel was a document which may fairly be described as a gospel in which he inserted matter taken from *Mark*. This document consisted of most of the non-Marcan matter found in *Luke* iii-xxiv and contained some incidents also contained in *Mark*, *e.g.* the Transfiguration and Pilate's offer to release Jesus, where *Luke* seems to be conflating two accounts, and the call of Peter, the rejection of Christ at Nazareth and his anointing by a woman, which are independent of *Mark* and are inserted at a different point in his narrative from that at which they occur in *Mark*.

There is a fairly marked difference of style and vocabulary between *Luke* and *Acts* which led critics in the past to assume that a longish time must have elapsed between the composition of the two books. But there are reasons for thinking that this need not have been and probably was not the case.

If we compare *Luke's* account of the cure of Jairus' daughter, which is taken from *Mark*, with the anointing of Christ by the woman who was a sinner, which is taken from *proto-Luke*, two passages of about the same length, we find that in the Marcan passage there are fifteen words or phrases common in *Acts* and

only three in that taken from *proto-Luke*. Again, if we compare *Luke's* account of the Gadarene demoniac, a Marcan passage, with a passage of about equal length (*Luke* xiii, 1-17) from *proto-Luke*, we find that the Marcan passage contains sixteen words or phrases common in *Acts* and the one from *proto-Luke* only four.

These facts seem to indicate that at the time Luke gave his Gospel its final form he was using the style and vocabulary which distinguish *Acts*. If *proto-Luke* was an earlier work of the author of *Luke-Acts* it is easy to understand why he did not trouble to make the same kind of alterations in his own work that he made in the extracts he inserted from *Mark*. This theory has not indeed received universal acceptance, but it may be said in its favour that it does provide an explanation of certain phenomena found in *Luke* which have not been satisfactorily explained on any other hypothesis.

From *Luke* let us turn to *Mark*. As Loisy said, *Mark*, though a source relatively to *Matthew* and *Luke*, is himself composite. It has long been noticed that what is known as 'The Little Apocalypse' is embedded in chapter xiii, and when it is removed what is left seems to be a complete and coherent discourse; so it seems that *Mark* was here fusing two documents. The feeding of the four thousand seems to be a variant account of the feeding of the five thousand, and some critics are of opinion that the whole section in which it occurs is more or less parallel to that in which the feeding of the five thousand occurs.

The sermon addressed to the multitudes in chapter iv is clearly composite. It consists of three parables, the sower, the seed growing secretly, and the mustard seed, each introduced by the words 'and he said,' and two pairs of sayings each introduced by 'and he said.' This very forcibly suggests that the parables and sayings were taken from some collection of 'Sayings of Jesus.' But in the middle of this sermon there is most inconsistently inserted Christ's reason for speaking in parables and the explanation of the parable of the sower addressed privately to the disciples. Could there be clearer proof of composition than this?

Further, there is good reason to suppose that the whole of *Mark* xiv, 1 to xvi, 8 (the Passion and Resurrection) is composite, two documents being fused as were the two documents in chapter xiii. First there are the repetitions 'as they were eating' at the opening of two consecutive paragraphs; 'He prayed that the hour might pass from him' and 'Father let this cup pass from me'; the double mention of false witnesses; the double mention of the crucifixion.

Then certain inconsistencies: before both the High Priest and Pilate Christ is first said to have answered nothing and then to

have answered; the chief priests having decided not to arrest Jesus at the feast, proceed to do so; the women at the sepulchre, after receiving a reassuring message to the disciples from the young man, flee in fear and say nothing to any man.

If we assume that two documents are here fused we see that the inconsistencies arose from two documents which, though covering the same ground, differed in some details. If my reconstruction of the documents is correct, one of the documents gives the same date for the crucifixion as John does and omits the institution of the Eucharist.

It is not of course possible to attribute every verse to one or other of the two sources, as clearly they must have overlapped to a considerable extent, but still there is a great deal which we can fairly confidently attribute to the one or the other. *Mark* was in all probability the first Gospel written and was based on documents of a fragmentary character.

There are two other points on which a few words must be said.

(1) *The Resurrection narratives.* In *I Corinthians* xv we have the fullest list of the post-resurrection appearances: yet the Gospels make no reference to the appearance to James or to the five hundred brethren. Again in *I Corinthians* it is stated that the first appearance was to Peter, while in *Matthew* it is to the women as they returned from the sepulchre, and in *pseudo-Mark* to Mary Magdalene. This problem is, I believe, unsolved and perhaps insoluble.

(2) Were all the sayings in the Gospels attributed to Christ actually spoken by him? It has been suggested that 'The Little Apocalypse' in *Mark* xiii is really a prophecy by a Christian prophet at the time Caligula intended to set up his statue in the Temple. It seems hardly credible that the Trinitarian baptismal formula and the passages in *Matthew* referring to the Church should be actual words of Jesus, and especially the implied attitude towards publicans in the words 'let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.' Perhaps Elmer Merrill was right in suggesting that the first generation of Christians did not draw the same distinction as we do between the words Jesus actually spoke while on earth and those of a Christian prophet speaking in the name of the Lord Jesus. But even allowing for this there is surely reason to think that the bulk of the teaching of Jesus recorded in the Synoptic Gospels was really given by him and is not the invention of early Christian teachers.

On the other hand, some of the narrative matter, especially some incidents peculiar to *Matthew* (*e.g.* the sealing of the tomb), are difficult to accept as trustworthy accounts of something that actually happened.

THE HISTORIC JESUS IN THE EARLIEST GOSPEL-SOURCES

By Professor C. J. Cadoux, M.A., D.Litt.

DESIRING to fulfil to the best of my ability the intentions of those responsible for the programme of the Conference, I have two preliminary observations to offer. (1) It is impossible, within the space of a single paper, to find room for an adequate and usable summary of the story of Jesus' life as the oldest sources enable us to know it; and (2) it is impossible to deal with the subject at all without trespassing, at least a little, on some of the topics assigned to other speakers. I judge it therefore to be my best plan to discuss the principles on which this so familiar story is best approached and handled, introducing sufficient narrative of the facts and reference to the topics assigned to others, but not more than is necessary, to make my own contribution intelligible.

At the outset, then, let me say that, as regards our *Synoptic Gospels* and their sources, I am a fairly whole-hearted follower of Drs. Streeter and T. W. Manson — with a tendency to put more faith in the factual value of the oldest strata than is generally approved in critical circles to-day. I can readily grant that all the material has passed through the medium of the primitive Christian mind, with its practical, homiletic and disciplinary interests: but I do not see that there is much knowledge to be gained along the lines of Form-Criticism, which indeed promotes plausible speculation but does not add materially to our knowledge of the facts.

As regards the *Fourth Gospel*, I share the view of most modern scholars that the discourses contained in it, long and short alike, are not reports or recollections of what was spoken, but interpretations—for the benefit of the Evangelist's contemporaries—of the significance of Jesus and his Gospel. I do not, however, admit that this understanding of the character of the discourses carries with it the corollary that either the Johannine narrative or its chronology is parabolic or unhistorical. The Evangelist is indeed prepared again and again to decorate his story with touches of the marvellous — as when he gives Mary a *pound* of perfume wherewith to anoint Jesus' feet, or sends a *cohort* of Roman troops under a

chiliarch to arrest him in Gethsemane. But however strange his method may seem to our minds, I believe that to have combined even such aberrations as these with a broadly reliable main narrative is a more credible and more likely proceeding than to have constructed a whole life-story on an almost entirely fanciful basis. This is not the place to argue the matter further: I must confine myself to indicating thus the line which seems to me to be the least difficult to follow.

I cannot discover in our programme any provision explicitly made for the discussion of the *chronological* problems of the Gospel-story. Part at least of the reason for this omission is, I take it, the awareness of the promoters that no chronology could be settled unless far more agreement could be reached than is likely to be reached on the reliability of the sources — particularly on that of the chronological scheme of the Fourth Gospel. It must therefore suffice here to say that, accepting as I do the trustworthiness of that scheme, and utilizing such other chronological hints as we have, I date the birth of Jesus about 7-5 B.C.; the coming of John the Baptist in the latter months of 27 A.D.; the baptism and temptation of Jesus at the beginning of 28; the first Passover of the ministry in the spring of 28; the arrest of John the Baptist and the commencement of the Galilaean ministry proper in December 28; the feeding of the crowd, Passover 29; the Passion, Passover 30.

Our oldest sources tell us nothing regarding the place and manner of the *birth* of Jesus, but leave us to infer that he was the eldest and legitimate son of Joseph the carpenter and his wife Mary, and was born at their home at Nazareth in Galilee. We are probably right in believing that such was the case. The later assignment of his birth to Bethlehem in Judaea would be an inevitable inference from *Micah* v, 2, in view of the acceptance of his Messiahship (*Mt.* ii, 5 *f.*), while belief in his birth from a virgin-mother would follow similarly from *Isaiah* vii, 14, as known to Greek-speaking Christians in its Septuagintal form (*Mt.* i, 22 *f.*). The unreal way in which *Mt.* ii, 15 connects *Hosea* xi, 1 with the visit of the Holy Family to Egypt confirms our doubts regarding the historical reliability of 'Matthew's' protevangelion, while our doubts concerning Luke's are strengthened—quite independently of the miraculous angel-stories—by the historical difficulties of the alleged imperial enrolment.

Although we are thus left to the simple probabilities of the case as regards the place and natural cause of Jesus' birth, there is on balance no sufficient reason for calling in question his descent, through his father Joseph, from *the royal Davidic line.* The abundant evidence that this descent was ascribed to him is

more easily explained on that hypothesis than by treating it as another implicate of his Messiahship. Nor ought we to miss the significance of the *personal name* conferred upon him by his parents. In calling him after Moses' great successor, by a name designating God as the source of deliverance, they reveal their concern for the speedy removal of the afflictions of Israel. We are hereby given part of the explanation — in so far as it has any natural explanation — of Jesus' own self-devotion to that sacred end.

Yet another factor operative in his early years calls for notice here. The well-known stress which in his teaching he laid on the *Fatherhood* of God, and his characteristic use of the familiar and domestic form of the word, '*Abba*' (as distinct from the customary and more formal phrase 'Our Father'), have been thought, not unreasonably, to imply that Joseph must have discharged his task as head of the family in a strikingly noble and sympathetic way, such as made a powerful impression on the mind and spiritual growth of the youthful Jesus.

In the autumn of 27 A.D. *John the Baptist* issued his call for a nation-wide repentance, in view of the fiery sifting which God's Messiah would very shortly carry out, and in which actual Jewish nationality would furnish no guarantee of safety. Only repentance — that is, a new moral re-consecration of life — would ensure security. And in the manner of a proselyte or convert to the *true* Judaism of the future, the would-be adherent underwent a baptism at John's hands in Jordan.

This *baptism* Jesus himself accepted. All other sources make the fact plain; and the earliest of them do so without explanation or embarrassment. But the authors of the later documents are troubled — evidently feeling the incongruity of a sinless Messiah undergoing a baptism of repentance. 'Matthew's' treatment of the Marcan story shows unmistakable signs of this (iii, 14-15), while the Fourth Evangelist avoids the difficulty by not explicitly recording the baptism at all. The favourite modern theory is that Jesus' baptism was a representative baptism on behalf of Israel; and the Bishop of Derby takes it for granted without argument that it was so, and categorically informs his readers to this effect.[1] Yet it is nowhere so stated or clearly implied in the records: and we cannot be sure that at that stage Jesus was already conscious of discharging a Messianic office. It is simpler to suppose that he was baptized as an indication that he wished to make for himself that solemn re-consecration for which John called, without claim-

[1] A. E. J. Rawlinson, *Christ in the Gospels* (1944), p. 27.

ing exemption on the ground of sinlessness, though not necessarily thereby avowing himself to have been conscious of sin.

The dove and the heavenly voice are in the Marcan account of the baptism perceptible to Jesus only, and indicate pictorially his full consciousness of *Messianic endowment*. The ensuing narrative of the temptation, coming as it does from Q, cannot be set aside as historically valueless; and it too presupposes Messianic consciousness. Not only so, but it confirms the hint given in the voice from heaven, that he is modelling his idea of Messiahship on the picture of the Servant of the Lord in *Deutero-Isaiah*, though —as I shall argue presently—without as yet including the prospect of martyrdom.

The Synoptic story passes on at once from the temptation to the commencement of Jesus' Galilaean ministry, immediately after the arrest of John by Herod Antipas. The Fourth Gospel, on the other hand, interposes here *an interval of ten or eleven months*, during which Jesus is either working alongside John, or paying a short visit to Galilee, or attending the Passover at Jerusalem. I can see no sufficient reason for rejecting this Johannine version of the course of events: and, accepting it, I must accept along with it the early Johannine date for *the cleansing of the Temple*. So unpopular is this view that I must say a word in defence of it. No one has yet given us any convincing reason why, if this incident really occurred late, the Fourth Evangelist should transfer it to the beginning, whereas the Synoptists, *i.e.* Mark (for the other two simply copy him) put it late, because Mark is under the certainly mistaken impression that Jesus went to Jerusalem only once, namely, at the very end of the ministry. The Marcan story of that visit is, as it stands, obviously overcrowded with incidents. The popular ovation attending his public entry into Jerusalem sufficiently accounts for the rulers' prompt decision to kill him—without the additional offence of a Temple-cleansing. This latter, therefore, I regard as an early prophetic protest against a popular abuse—a protest hinting at the world-wide range of God's merciful purposes, but taking a practical form of a kind which Jesus did not subsequently repeat.

With the passing of John from the scene, *Jesus' vision of his task* becomes more clearly defined. The key to the situation is his Messiahship—which is a *national* office arising from his unique filial relationship as '*the* Son' to God as '*the* Father.' Scholars have been unduly slow to recognize and rightly to interpret the numerous indications in our sources of what I can only call the 'Judaism' of Jesus. The word 'Messiah' had no meaning—still less had the title 'the King of the Jews'—other than one of which

Israel was the centre. Furthermore, at the start, he views his Messiahship as destined to be *successful*, *i.e.* to meet with national acceptance, but without his being free from opposition and hardship. The main proof of this view is that without it the disappointment he expressed over Jerusalem at the close of the ministry makes no sense. Another unnoticed confirmation of it is that, hoping (unlike John) to win the whole nation, Jesus neither practises nor enjoins baptism, a rite which implied a selection of a part of the nation. He does not proclaim himself as Messiah, lest people should ruin his work for him by misinterpreting his aims: but he pushes ahead with his compassionate works of healing and his prophetic words regarding the New Way of Life, doing and saying from time to time striking things, such as might hint to the observant where the true Messiah was to be seen.

A good instance of these *Messianic hints* is the feeding of the crowd. This incident is best understood as in reality a general sharing out of all available supplies, stimulated by Jesus' own generous example, sanctified by his solemn thanksgiving as the presiding house-father, and suggestively anticipating that great Messianic Feast which figures so frequently in his recorded teaching. The miraculous character needlessly given to it in the Gospels marks it as one of the supposed *Nature-Miracles*, which—unlike the more credible narratives of healing—do not appear in the oldest traceable Gospel-sources, Q and L. It is interesting to note that, of the six Nature-Miracles in the Gospels, two (the feedings of the five thousand and the four thousand) not only reflect only one incident, but were probably a non-miraculous 'Messianic hint,' while a third (the fig-tree) is probably a garbled version of the parable recorded in *Luke* xiii, 6-9. The remaining three are best taken as legendary stories which came to be told in the Master's honour. We may be surprised and thankful that there are not more of them.

What I have called the Judaism of Jesus did not prevent him from including *the Gentile world* in his ultimate plan; for the prophetic Scriptures, especially the Deutero-Isaianic Servant-Poems, included many passages suggesting that it was Israel's task to impart the true knowledge of God to the Gentiles. Had Jesus openly promulgated this as his direct objective, he would probably have roused such passionate opposition that his plan would have been ruined at the start. Yet the hints and suggestions of it, when collected, make the reality of it indubitable. One of these, strangely overlooked, was his choice of Jonah as his sign-prophet, for Jonah is the only prophet in the Old Testament who is sent to

offer God's mercy, on repentance, to a Gentile and indeed an enemy people.

A still stranger oversight is the failure of scholars to recognize Jesus' concern over *the political plight of Israel*. We know well what fierce tension existed in his day between the Jews and their Roman and Herodian overlords, and how it culminated in the war of 66-70 A.D. It is surely idle to suppose that one coming forward as Messiah about 30 A.D., offering himself to the nation as a national counsellor, expecting the nation as a whole to follow him, bidding them pray for God's Kingdom to come on earth, quietly embodying in his programme the universalistic visions of the Old Testament prophets, and maintaining to the last his royal claim and title — that such a one could have had no policy to propose or word to say to his fellow-countrymen on the most threatening problem with which they were faced. When against that background we read the story of the Temptation, the non-resistance teaching of *Mt.* v, 38-48, the warning of *Lk.* xiii, 1-5 (about Pilate, the Galilaeans, and the tower of Siloam), and many other passages, it is surely clear that a prime element in Jesus' practical plan was an endeavour to induce Israel to abandon that vindictive hatred towards Rome in favour of the path of peaceful world-service and world-enlightenment.

It is not inconsistent with this view to suppose that he also believed that, before the generation contemporary with himself had died away, there would have occurred a *cataclysmic coming of God's Kingdom*. Since, however, most of what he says about this is wrapt up with, or rather overlaid by, his later expectation of his own Passion, it is not possible for us to make out precisely how, before that grim expectation came home to him, the victorious fulfilment of the Divine plan for humanity, under himself as Messianic leader, shaped itself in his own mind.

The whole of the latter part of the ministry, unlike the former part, was overshadowed by *the growing certainty that he would not be accepted by the nation*, but that, on the contrary, if he persisted in pressing his claims, the opposition he would encounter would culminate in his suffering a violent death. While I insist that the Gospel-story is unintelligible unless the reality of this change of outlook is admitted, I do not imagine that it was a sudden change, assignable to a particular date. It was led up to by frequent experiences of opposition; and it was followed by repeated efforts to avert the threatened calamity. None the less, it represents a clear difference between the earlier and the later

periods—each of which was characterized by its own distinct forecast of the future.

Broadly speaking, we may see the watershed between the two phases in the divulgence of his Messiahship at Caesarea-Philippi, where also the Gospels place the first *prophecy of the Passion.* While, in the manner of a devout Jew, Jesus naturally viewed the developing course of events as controlled, and in a sense determined, by Divine Providence, we are not to suppose that he decided on his course of action simply in order to comply with a programme already known in some detail from Scripture. It was the moral realities of the situation that were the determining factors: it was only the actual and inevitable *dénouement* that was capable of being viewed as having been foreordained by God. The view to the contrary, elaborated by the late Sir Edwyn Hoskyns in *Mysterium Christi*, I cannot but regard as gravely mistaken.

The reason why Jesus accepted death was that such acceptance was necessitated by what I have called the moral realities of the situation. For the only alternatives to it were either to relapse into silence, or to flee to another land, or to take the sword. All of these were ruled out, not primarily by Old Testament prophecies, but by their ethical wrongness. In rejecting him, Israel would reject his policy of charity to the Gentile world and of conciliation towards Rome, and so would incur sooner or later *the horrors of a Roman conquest.* The passionate emphasis with which Jesus warned the Jews against this disaster is abundantly attested in the Gospels, when once our eyes are opened to it. Nor must we fail to note that the anticipation of death, representing as it did a real frustration of God's healing purposes in the Messiah's mission, was for Jesus a truly crushing sorrow, the agony of which is visible not only in Gethsemane and on Golgotha, but on many an earlier occasion.

Grave, unspeakably grave, as this frustration was, it was in Jesus' mind in some ways balanced by countervailing assurances. The surrender of his life would prove to be '*a ransom for many*' —a sacrificial phrase which we may interpret by saying that his death would effect a widespread movement of repentance. But he is also reported by Mark to have foretold that he would, after being put to death, 'rise again after three days.' I am very unwilling to trespass on a field allotted to another reader: but I must, if I am to be intelligible, say briefly how I interpret this prediction. I submit that, in so speaking, Jesus was really referring to what he elsewhere called *the coming of the Son of Man.* 'After three days' (which Luke and Matthew alter without warrant to 'on the third day,' in order to make it fit the first Easter) is a well-

attested idiomatic expression for a short undefined interval, and can therefore be easily interpreted as designating that unknown period within the current generation which would elapse before the *Parousia*. If this equation can be accepted, a number of difficulties disappear. Much of Dr. Glasson's laboured attempt to prove that Jesus expected no Parousia,[2] for instance, is seen to rest on a misunderstanding: Dr. Dodd's inference that, because with Jesus the Kingdom had in a sense already come, there was no need for a future coming, also loses its force: while Schweitzer's uncritical acceptance of *Mt.* x, 23, to the effect that the Son of Man would 'come' before the disciples had finished their first mission-tour, fails to fit in with all the rest of the evidence. Moreover, an interval of anything up to thirty or forty years is available for 'the Church' Jesus was founding to grow, whether he actually called it by that name or not. This elision of *the Resurrection, as a separate item in Jesus' forecast*, different from the Parousia, is finally confirmed, not only by his words to the penitent brigand, which describe him as going that very day to Paradise, but also by his frequent comparison of his disciples after his death to a houseful of servants awaiting the return of their absent master. Incidentally, let me say here that Dr. Dodd's attempt to harmonize this last-named comparison with his theory of realized eschatology seems to me unsuccessful.

I have left myself but little time to touch on *the actual events of the latter half of the ministry*: I judged that even what little could be said about them would not be intelligible without the dominating ideas in the Saviour's mind being elucidated. But I would like to mention here a suggestion which I put forward in *The Expositor* for March, 1925, towards harmonizing not too fancifully the Johannine and the Synoptic narratives. It will be remembered (1) that the Synoptic material in general contains many traces of Jesus having been in Jerusalem at least a few times before the final Passover: (2) that the references in Luke's so-called 'Great Interpolation' in its present form to Jesus' journey or journeys to Jerusalem are very confused: (3) that *John* v represents Jesus as going to Jerusalem for a Feast (which Feast, as *John* v ought to follow *John* vi, is usually identified with Pentecost—May, 29 A.D.); *John* vii, for the Feast of Booths in October; and, *John* x, 22, for the Feast of Dedication in December. What made Mark limit the Jerusalem-visits to one we cannot say: but if he did make this mistake, may not some of his Galilee-material recount incidents which, had he only known, really took place

[2] T. F. Glasson, *The Second Advent* (1945).

in Jerusalem? Possibly, therefore, the dispute about defilement in *Mk.* vii, which belongs to the early period, when Jesus was avoiding too much publicity in Galilee because of Herod, took place in Jerusalem on the occasion of the Feast of Pentecost. Be that as it may, I conjecture that the sections included in Luke's Great Interpolation are not just items confusedly thrown together in a scrap-book, because Luke did not know where else to place them, but that they stand in the roughly chronological order of his source, and that they cover the visits to Jerusalem for Booths and Dedication, though all actual mention of Jesus getting to Jerusalem has been excised. The purpose of this excision of the material may have been to avoid any too obvious contradiction of the Marcan story, though it has resulted in leaving the geographical indications unclear. I therefore connect the Parable of the Good Samaritan (with its allusion to the Jericho-road) and the visit to Martha and Mary in *Lk.* x, and the references to the Galilaeans killed at their sacrifices and to the tower at Siloam at the beginning of *Lk.* xiii, to the Feast of Booths. This would place at Jerusalem the Beelzebub-dispute of *Lk.* xi — a violent controversy, which Mark's earlier dating (iii, 22-30) seems to place too early. Further allusions to a journey to Jerusalem occur later in *Lk.* xiii, in *Lk.* xiv, 25 and in xvii, 11; while in xviii, 9-14, comes the parable of the two men praying in the Temple, which, being probably spoken at Jerusalem, might belong to the time of the Feast of Dedication towards the close of December, 29 A.D. We should then be able with a clear conscience to identify the passage across the Jordan recorded in *John* x, 40 with the crossing mentioned in *Mk.* x, 1 and *Mt.* xix, 1, though ignored by Luke.

I fear this paper is bound to be but a torso, and a fragmentary torso at that, for no opportunity remains to deal with the important events of *the last three months of Jesus' life on earth.* For the reasons stated at the beginning, I have felt it best to devote space rather to considering the principles on which the material has to be treated, and to discovering the key to the main problems involved in the understanding of it, than to enumerating in summary a host of already familiar items. In regard to the last days I would say only this: seeing that the Synoptic story despite its immense value is in any case in need of modification because it includes too much incident for the last few days, and seeing that there are good reasons for believing that the cursing of the fig-tree never occurred at all and that the saying about the two greatest commandments was spoken earlier, there is the less unlikelihood that the Temple-cleansing should be placed earlier, where I have tenta-

tively placed it. Further, if the Marcan framework is so imperfect (having also the Last Supper and the Crucifixion apparently on the wrong dates), it is less impossible to make room for the raising of Lazarus, richly embroidered as that event is in the Fourth Evangelist's characteristic way.

This reconstruction of the main aspects of the life of the historic Jesus will inevitably seem to many precarious and arbitrary —particularly my insistence on his early expectations of success, on his Judaism and universalism, on his political concern, on the identity of his resurrection-prophecies and his parousia-prophecies, and on their dependence on his becoming certain of the approaching Passion. That some element of conjecture is involved in our reconstruction is mainly due to the fact that the true memory of the facts was clouded over by the drastic changes through which the enterprise of Jesus passed in the course of the first century. But I would plead in justification that I have imported no more conjecture into the story than is inherently probable and is needed to make it hang together as an intelligible unity. We need a representation of Jesus' life which shall avoid the over-individualism of so vivid a personal portrait as the late Dr. Glover's *Jesus of History*, the incredible paradoxes of Dr. Schweitzer's eschatological findings, the excessive scepticism of the Form-critics, and the onesidedness of realized eschatology. If my own reconstruction implies an element of limitation in Jesus' knowledge, especially as regards the form which he thought his future triumph would take, it does not lose sight of that majesty of personal power, that creative insight into the ways of God, and that abounding love for men, which mark him as man's rightful Lord, and which help to explain how, in the lives of all who trust and follow him, he becomes

> A lever to uplift the earth
> And roll it in another course.

If it imports theological difficulties not previously felt, the right reply is not to make that a reason for pronouncing the story untrue, but to undertake a fresh examination of the grounds on which it has been built up and a fresh effort to realize the facts of history and experience, for the purpose of framing a doctrine of his Person and Work such as will do the best justice we are capable of to the great realities.

JESUS: HIS MESSIANIC CONSCIOUSNESS AND OFFICE

By Canon H. D. A. Major, D.D.

THERE were ardent Messianic expectations in the days when Jesus lived in Palestine. These seem to have taken two main forms.

(*a*) Some Jews (pre-eminently the Pharisees) hoped for the advent of a Celestial Messiah, pre-existent in heaven, who would descend to the earth with his angels and archangels, end the reign of unrighteousness and inaugurate the Divine Kingdom over mankind. This may be called the apocalyptic Messianic expectation and it is enshrined in various forms in the Jewish apocalypses.

(*b*) Other Jews expected the advent of a mundane militarist Messianic Conqueror, a scion of the House of David, who in hard-fought battles against the Pagans would establish a Jewish world-wide empire. This constituted the Messianic expectation of the Zealots.

But no doubt there were other forms of Messianic expectation. We cannot tell what form the Messianic hope took in the breasts of the aged Simeon and the aged Anna who prayed in the Temple for the 'consolation of Israel.' What is clear is that the environment of Jesus, as the Apocalypses, the Targums, and the histories of Josephus testify, was alive with Messianic expectations. The preaching of John the Baptist kindled these Messianic hopes into a flame, and as the Third Evangelist writes:

> 'All men mused in their hearts whether John was the Messiah or no' (*Lk.* iii, 15).

It is not in the least unlikely that Jesus shared these Messianic expectations. This would constitute the background of His Messianic consciousness, supposing that He possessed such a consciousness. But did Jesus possess a Messianic consciousness?

1. All four of our Canonical Gospels indicate implicitly and explicitly that He possessed Messianic consciousness. It is clear that these four Gospels would never have been written if their authors had not been convinced that Jesus believed Himself to be the Messiah and had carried out His Messianic mission to the uttermost.

2. In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus exhibits this Messianic consciousness by opening His ministry with the cleansing of the Temple. But in the Synoptists, with greater historic probability, the Messianic mission of Jesus is preceded by the narrative of the birth of His Messianic consciousness at His baptism. The details of this event are given by *Mark*, *Matthew* and *Luke*. In *Mark*, the oldest account and no doubt the source used by Matthew and Luke, it is related that as Jesus was coming up out of the water, after having been baptized by John in the Jordan, He saw the heavens cleft asunder and experienced the descent of the Divine Spirit into Him and heard the Divine Voice say to Him: 'Thou art My Son, the Beloved, in Thee I am well pleased.' Matthew's account and Lukes' differ from Mark's account, not in the order of events, but in their mode. Compared carefully with its Matthaean and Lukan parallels it will be observed that Mark relates the event from the point of view of Jesus Himself; it is subjective and psychological, but in *Mt.* and *Lk.* it has become in various degrees objective and miraculous. According to the Marcan account, had you and I been on the banks of the Jordan when John baptized Jesus we should not have seen the heavens opened and the Divine Spirit descending like a dove, nor should we have heard the Divine voice saying 'Thou art my Son.' These are the experiences of Jesus alone. They are not even those of the Baptist, although the Fourth Gospel makes them his (*John* i, 32). The Messiahship of Jesus at this stage was His own secret. It was possessed by no one else.

It ought to be noted that there is an important variant preserved in some of the Lukan codices. The Divine announcement runs in them: 'Thou art my Son, Beloved; *To-day have I begotten Thee*' (citation from *Psalm* xii, 7 : LXX). This makes the awakening of the Messianic consciousness identical with the Messianic birth and points to the existence of a pneumatic or spiritual Christology in primitive Christianity which is earlier in date than the Virgin Birth Christology. It was the gift of the Spirit, the Divine anointing, which constituted Jesus the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One. Hence St. Luke records that Jesus in the Synagogue of Nazareth read out and applied to Himself the words of *Isaiah* (lxi, 1), 'The Lord hath anointed me to preach the Gospel.'

After the account of the Baptism, *Mathew* and *Luke* relate in a dramatic manner (their literary source is *Q*) the threefold temptation of Jesus in the wilderness. The Tempter addresses Him: 'If Thou be the Son of God'—or if you are the Messiah

as you believe yourself to be — then turn these stones into bread; cast yourself down from the pinnacle of the Temple and let God deliver you miraculously; worship me, and I in return will give you all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. Jesus rejects the economic conception of Messiahship; He rejects the miraculous conception of Messiahship; He rejects the mundane, imperial conception of Messiahship.

Did these Messianic temptations assail Him all through His ministry or only at its outset? Perhaps His words to St. Peter at Caesarea Philippi (as recorded in *Mark*), 'Get thee behind me, Satan,' suggest that they did. What is clear is that if Jesus had not possessed the Messianic consciousness and believed Himself called to the Messianic office He would not have had these temptations at all.

What is left of the Messianic office for Jesus if these three conceptions of Messiahship (economic, miraculous, political) are rejected? The Messiahship becomes essentially spiritual and moral. Its supreme gifts to men are spiritual and moral—not materialistic and economic; not political and world dominating; not miraculous and magical.

> 'Man doth not live by bread alone: but by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God, doth man live' (*Deut.* viii, 3; cf. *Mt.* iv, 5 and *Luke* iv, 4).

The proclamation of this Word of God is the supreme Messianic mission.

> 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve.'

Supreme loyalty to God; absolute obedience to the Divine will — to make this ideal of human duty prevail by teaching and example is the function of the Messiah. To make use, not of miraculous powers, amazing wonders, but of such help as God provides in normal ways to carry out His Messianic office within the limitations of his human nature — a human Son of God — made in all things like unto His brethren (*Heb.* ii, 17), is the Messiah's task.

Was it this which Jesus wished to express when He gave Himself the title 'Son of Man'? The significance of the title Son of Man for the understanding of the Messianic consciousness of Jesus is far from clear. Some exegetes would have it that the title is borrowed from the *Book of Enoch*, where it is used of the pre-existent Messiah dwelling with God in heaven and about to be revealed on earth. It is very doubtful whether Jesus was a student of the Apocalypses and would have identified Himself with the Son of Man in *Enoch*. In the Synoptists (unlike the Fourth Gospel) we have no evidence that Jesus thought of Himself as pre-existent

in heaven before His earthly birth. Other exegetes, like Professor Manson, assert that Jesus does not apply the title Son of Man to Himself individually, but, as in the *Book of Daniel*, to the Kingdom of the Saints of the Most High to be established on earth; and it is the suffering and triumph of this Kingdom which is to be understood by the teaching of Jesus about the Passion and the Resurrection of the Son of Man. Perhaps the weakness of this collective interpretation is that it seems to have found no acceptance in the Primitive Church. Other exegetes understand that by the title Son of Man, Jesus identifies Himself with the human race —the Representative Man. The Son of Man, not of *Ezekiel*, which represents man in his weakness, but the Son of Man of the *Psalms* — Divine as well as human and in the order of being next to God Himself. The adoption of this title by Jesus harmonizes with his whole attitude towards the Messianic secret. The title both conceals and reveals the significance of the personality that bears it.

The Messianic secret communicated to Jesus at His Baptism by the Divine Father, Jesus kept concealed in His own breast and only under the pressure of circumstances did He reveal it. To have revealed it prematurely would have entailed disaster to His Messianic mission. In St. Mark's Gospel the historic order of the unveiling of the Messianic secret is remarkably preserved — the other three Gospels depart from this historic order.

(*a*) In *Mark* the first to recognize the Messianic secret is the demoniac in the Synagogue of Capernaum: 'I know Thee who thou art, the Holy One of God' — the very title by which St. Peter confesses the Messiahship of Jesus in *John* vi, 69. Thereafter numbers of demoniacs whose faith in Jesus enabled them to be healed confessed Him as the Messiah. Why they were the first to recognize Jesus as the Messiah is an interesting psychological problem. In the Orient, madness and divine inspiration are regarded as akin; so Scott brings out in his dialogue between Saladin and Coeur de Lion in *The Talisman*. Jesus, however, shewed no satisfaction at being hailed as Messiah. He sharply commanded the demoniac to be silent, so also with all the other demoniacs.

(*b*) The next stage in the unveiling of the Messianic secret occurs, not in *Mark*, but in *Q*, our oldest Gospel source (*Mt.* xi, 2-6; *Lk.* vii, 18-20). When John the Baptist, in prison, heard of the success accompanying the mission of Jesus he sends two of his disciples to ask Him: 'Art Thou the Coming One (a Messianic title) or should we expect another?' Jesus answers John's disciples: 'Go tell John what things ye have seen and heard. Blessed is he

whosoever shall not be scandalized by Me.' What wisdom, what modesty, and what mystery is in that message. It must have given John something to think about.

(*c*) The next stage in the unveiling of the Messianic secret is at Caesarea Philippi, and here we return to *Mark* (viii, 27).

> 'And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the villages of Caesarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?
>
> And they answered, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias; and others, One of the prophets.
>
> And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.'

This scene is well known to readers of the Gospels but not, I think in most cases, rightly interpreted by them. In *Matthew* Jesus is very pleased with Peter and says to him, 'Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.' In *Mark* (as I read it) Jesus is aware that reports are current that He is the Messiah. He is aware that His apostles have been discussing these reports: He realizes that He must take action in the matter. Hence He puts to the apostles the question: 'Who is it that people are saying that I am?' The apostles reply: 'Some say you are John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but others, one of the prophets.' 'Quite so; but what do you say?' Peter answers: 'Thou art the Messiah.' On receiving this answer, Jesus does not, as in *Mt.*, commend St. Peter, but immediately charges him and his fellow-apostles not to speak about it, and then explains to them that His Messiahship is entirely different from what they anticipate, and that it involves rejection and suffering for Him. Peter rebukes Jesus, and Jesus answers: 'Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men.'

According to the Lucan order (not according to the Matthaean order) after Caesarea Philippi (*Lk.* ix, 18; cf. *Mt.* xvi, 13) there follows a most authoritative declaration by Jesus Himself affirming the unique character of His Messianic consciousness.

> 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: yea Father; for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight. All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth who the Son is, save the Father; and who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him' (*Lk.* x, 21, 22; cf. *Mt.* xi, 25).

This declaration would seem to have been uttered by Jesus in connection with His lamentation over Galilee when leaving it for the last time on His journey up to Jerusalem. Older critics, on

account of the likeness of its style and contents, regarded it as derived from the Fourth Gospel. Dr. Hensley Henson spoke of it as an 'aerolite from the Johannean heaven which had become imbedded in the bosom of the Synoptic tradition.' But to-day it seems agreed that it is derived from *Q*, our earliest Gospel source.

This declaration of Jesus emphasizes that it is His unique knowledge of the Divine Father which constitutes His Messianic consciousness and it is the proclamation of this Divine Wisdom which constitutes His Messianic office.

Henceforth two things are to be noted in the records of the teaching of Jesus.

1. The constant repetition of the prediction of the Passion and Resurrection of the Son of Man.

2. That loyal discipleship demands readiness to bear the Cross by those who would follow Jesus.

It would seem *at this point* that the Messianic consciousness of Jesus admits and accepts the ideal of a suffering Messiah. The fate of John the Baptist and the growing hostility of the ecclesiastical and civil authorities to Jesus may have developed this element in His Messianic consciousness. No doubt, too, the sufferings of some of the most notable of the Old Testament prophets, as well as the figure of the Suffering Servant of the Lord in *Isaiah* liii, and possibly in some of the *Psalms*, may have also served to develop this aspect of the Messianic office as something which had to be endured by Jesus as part of His Messianic mission. We cannot be dogmatic on this point. Undoubtedly the doctrine of the Suffering Messiah was greatly developed by the Church after the Crucifixion, and especially by St. Paul, and this development was needful for the defence of the Messiahship of Jesus due to His shameful death—'for he that is hanged is accursed of God,' (*Deut.* xxi, 23). It has to be borne in mind that in Gethsemane Jesus, by His prayer, 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me,' was not up till that time absolutely convinced that it was the Divine Will that the Messiah must suffer. In Gethsemane Jesus accepted His Passion as the Divine Will. This does not mean, however, that Jesus viewed His death as a propitiatory sacrifice. This interpretation of the death of Jesus is not derived from Jesus but from St. Paul. We may hold, however, that Jesus, in the light of *Isaiah* liii, deemed His Messianic sufferings to be *vicarious* and needful to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. The words in *Mark*, 'The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many,' ought to be interpreted in this vicarious sense. It is very doubtful, however, whether this passage was actually uttered by Jesus. Luke does not

record this saying of Jesus, although he does give the teaching of Jesus that service is true greatness. It is much more probably a very early Christian comment on the teaching of Jesus that, in the Kingdom, the greatest of all is the servant of all. This primitive comment points to Jesus as the supreme example of the fulfilment by Him of His own ideal of greatness, which extended even to the giving of His life for human salvation.

Although Jesus forbade His disciples at Caesarea Philippi to proclaim His Messiahship, yet there are indications that He had now come to a stage in His ministry when he had resolved to proclaim it, but extreme caution characterizes His way of doing it. There is only one place where it can be done effectively. That is not Galilee, where He had laboured so much and apparently in vain (*Mt.* xi, 20; *Lk.* x, 13). It must be done in Jerusalem and at the Feast of the Passover. Mark's Gospel expresses the extreme anxiety which His disciples felt about the approaching crisis. Jesus makes the proclamation symbolically — riding on an ass into Jerusalem when crowds of Galilean pilgrims and disciples from Jerusalem hail Him with the Messianic salutation of *Hosanna*. The symbolism of the action is based on a prediction in *Zechariah* (ix, 9), which foretells Zion's King coming to her, not as a conqueror, but as the Prince of Peace.

The second symbolic act of Jesus is His cleansing of the Temple. This is plainly a fulfilment of a prophecy in *Malachi* where the Divine Messenger comes to the Temple and purges it in order that the sons of Levi may offer acceptable worship to Yahweh.

> 'The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. . . . And he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness' (*Malachi* iii, 1-3).

The third symbolic act was the recital of the Parable of the Vineyard, when the heir to the vineyard is slain by the tenants. In the parable the Lord of the vineyard describes the heir as His Son —a Messianic title.

If the first two of these three symbolic acts are really historical they indicate clearly that Jesus definitely used the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy to *express the nature* of His Messiahship. I do not think it can be definitely said that, like the primitive Christian Church, He made use of the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy to *prove* His Messiahship.

In what way Jesus intended to make His final and dramatic proclamation of His Messiahship is beyond our knowledge. The

conclusion of His ministry in Jerusalem came to a close with dramatic suddenness. He was betrayed by Judas Iscariot. The scene in the Garden of Gethsemane indicates the shock which His betrayal and imminent Passion produced on Jesus. Intense prayer enabled Him to accept it as the Divine Will, and gave Him the moral and spiritual strength to face the issue. This is manifest in His trial before the Sanhedrin, and when adjured by the High Priest to declare plainly whether He was the Messiah He made His declaration so clearly and emphatically that He was immediately condemned to death as a blasphemous impostor.

In the trial before Pilate (according to the Synoptists) He said nothing. He maintained His silence in His interview with Herod Antipas (according to *Luke*). He was crucified.

Did His Messianic consciousness forsake Him at the moment of death? *Mark*, followed by *Matthew*, records only one utterance by Jesus when on the Cross : '*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*' Great has been the controversy about the significance of this utterance. I cannot attempt any satisfying investigation here except to point out that it must remain in doubt historically whether Jesus did recite the opening words of *Psalm* xxii.

1. There was no apostle of Jesus present to hear Him. They had all 'fled.'

2. The women who witnessed His execution beheld Him 'afar off.'

3. Those nearest to Him, presumably members of the guard, said, 'Behold He calls for Elias,' which clearly indicates that their interpretation of what Jesus said did not coincide with the interpretation of the Primitive Christian Church.

4. The text of the utterance has many variants, so that it is not conclusive whether Jesus spoke in Hebrew or in Aramaic.

5. The verdict of the centurion indicates that he was deeply impressed by the way in which Jesus died : 'Surely this was the Son of God' (*Mt.* xxvii, 54).

The accounts of the Words from the Cross in *St. Luke* give not the slighest indication that the Messianic consciousness of Jesus was in any way weakened by His sufferings. The two prayers He utters on the Cross are characteristic of Jesus both in their phraseology and in their spirit : 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.' 'Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.'

An indirect testimony to the historicity of Luke's account is contained in the record of the martyrdom of St. Stephen, whose death is plainly modelled on that of his Saviour. Luke, who de-

ived from women disciples of Jesus many original elements in his Gospel, may well have derived this record of the death of Jesus rom one of them.

St. John's account of the death of Jesus is characteristically ohannine, and in its way testifies to the strength of the Messianic onsciousness of Jesus to the last moment of His life, closing with ne triumphant declaration 'It is finished.' My Messianic mission as been completed.

Resurrection and Ascension narratives follow in our primitive hristian records. How precisely they are to be interpreted is a natter of much controversy, but this at least can be said: If those o whom Jesus appeared had not believed He was the Messiah in ne days of His ministry, it is hardly conceivable that they would ave developed their faith in His Messiahship after He had been rucified.

Did the Second Advent of Jesus and Himself as the Final udge of mankind constitute an element in the Messianic con-ciousness of Jesus?

Our eschatologists answer 'Yes,' but Dr. Francis Glasson in masterly treatise on *The Second Advent* (1945) produces weighty vidence against this conclusion. He asserts that Jesus neither elieved it nor taught it. It was the faith of the Primitive Church nd it originated in that body. It came neither from Jesus Himself or from Judaism. The author of the Fourth Gospel, the most rofound interpreter of the Messianic Consciousness of Jesus ould seem to be in agreement with Dr. Glasson's conclusion when e cites Jesus as saying:

> 'If any man hear my sayings and keep them not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world . . . the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day' (*Jn.* xii, 45-48).

It is not in some apocalyptic cataclysm as President of the reat Assize, that Christians should look for the coming of the on of Man, but in the inspiring presence of the Spirit of Jesus n the hearts of His loyal followers, 'Lo I am with you all the ays' (*Mt.* xxviii, 20), and in the ever-advancing triumph of the ingdom of God: 'Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in eaven.'

JESUS AND HIS GOSPEL

By the Rev. P. Gardner-Smith, B.D.

THE title of this paper, Jesus and His Gospel, might be taken to cover almost the whole field of Christian theology. But in its context it may be understood to mean that we are invited to consider, chiefly from a historical point of view, the real significance of our Lord's ministry and teaching. Dr. Major has already dealt with the messianic consciousness of Jesus, a subject intimately connected with the whole question of His message; Mr. Norman Power will deal this evening with the parables; now it is for us to take a more general view, and try to discover why the earthly ministry of Jesus set on foot a movement which was destined to encircle the earth and to change the whole course of human history. What was the real character of the earliest 'gospel'? How can we explain this sudden release of a great spiritual force?

One thing is clear; Christianity sprang out of Judaism, and Jesus was a Jew after the flesh, but Christianity was not merely a republication of Old Testament religion. The Hebrew people had had prophets in plenty, but their influence had never spread far beyond the limits of Judaism. The Jews were, and are, unique, distinguished from all other races both by their virtues and their failings. They have played no small part in the history of the last two thousand years. But there has never been any probability of their becoming predominant in the world, or of their absorbing other nations and other religions. Their strength has rather lain in their exclusiveness. And yet, although Jesus and His followers were Jews, their movement began almost immediately to overstep the boundaries of nationalism, and in the centuries that followed the Church had its main successes among peoples hitherto uninfluenced by Hebrew traditions. In a sense Jerusalem conquered Rome, but not in the name of Judaism. The Jews were always the enemies of the Church. Clearly, therefore, Christianity was something very much more than a form of Jewish religion.

This was recognized from the first. The writers of the New Testament had indeed a Jewish background, but they were at one in realizing that a new age had dawned with the coming of Jesus. They believed that something had occurred whereby all that had gone before was summed up and superseded. Not all came so

ear to the formulation of a philosophy of history as did St. Paul, ith his doctrine of the Law as 'a tutor until Christ came'; but ie apostolic writers never doubted that God's dealings with His ncient people had been mainly preparatory to the consummation ached when He sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world. hat was the true significance of the argument from prophecy, and finds clear expression in the more reflective writers of the New estament:

> 'In the beginning was the Word. . . . In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. . . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.'
>
> 'God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in a Son.'

was the firm conviction of the New Testament writers that the oming of Jesus was the dividing line in human history, marking at nce the culmination of all that had gone before and the deter- inant of all that was yet to come. How are we to explain this xtraordinary conviction, a conviction which provided the driving orce of Christian missionary activity?

As we look back at the records of early Christianity we can see hat the development of the Church was controlled by two main actors, the memory of the work and teaching of Jesus which be- ame enshrined in the four gospels, and the convictions about esus which formed the substance of the primitive *kerygma*, or reaching. The difficulty of our problem lies in the task of relating iese two factors.

To take the second first, the apostolic 'preaching' was of Jesus ie Saviour and Judge of men, born, crucified, raised from the ead, ascended into Heaven, coming again to judge the quick and ie dead and to reign for ever in glory—the Jesus of the Apostles' reed, in fact, a creed which passes over the ministry altogether. rofessor Dodd and others have shewn how this *kerygma* is em- odied in the speeches of *Acts*, and underlies all the New Testa- ient writings. It justified and inspired the summons of the hristian missionary to repentance and baptism, with the promise f the earnest of the Spirit and a share in the glory to be revealed.

But how far was this *kerygma* consonant with the first factor, ie actual teaching of Jesus Himself? Was the Gospel of the hurch a fair summary of the Gospel of Jesus? or must we draw ie contrast between the Gospel *of* Christ and and the Gospel *bout* Christ on which some critics insist? If we judge only by the ynoptic Gospels (written, be it noted, by men who held the hurch's faith as embodied in the *kerygma*) the chief subject of ie teaching of Jesus was not His own Person. He spoke of God,

and of men, and of the true relationship between God and man but even in *St. Luke* 'Paulinism' is hard to discover; and although Jesus spoke of the Kingdom of God and probably accepted the title of Messiah, a natural exposition of His recorded utterances does not find His teaching to be dominated by that eschatology which figured so largely in the preaching of His followers. Dare I still quote Harnack?

> 'There is a sphere of ethical thought which is peculiarly expressive of Jesus' Gospel. Firstly, Jesus severed the connexion existing in his day between ethics and the external forms of religious worship and technical observance. He would have absolutely nothing to do with the purposeful and self-seeking pursuit of "good works" in combination with the ritual of worship. He exhibited an indignant contempt for men who allow their neighbours, nay, their parents, to starve, and on the other hand send gifts to the temple. . . . Love and mercy are ends in themselves.
>
> In all questions of morality he goes straight to the root, that is to say, to the disposition and intention. It is only thus that what he calls "the higher righteousness" can be understood.
>
> What he freed from its connexion with self-seeking and ritual elements, he reduced to *one* root and to one motive — love. Love is what remains when the soul dies to itself. But it is always the love which serves, and only in this function does it exist and live.
>
> We must steep ourselves again and again in the Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount. They contain Jesus' ethics and his religion, united at the root, and freed from all external and particularistic elements.' [1]

That was written nearly fifty years ago, and much water has flowed under the bridge since Harnack delivered his famous lectures in Berlin. We are assured to-day that he presented a travesty of Christianity, a mere projection of German 'liberal Christianity' into the past. Most modern writers on theology begin with the statement that 'liberal protestantism' has been overthrown, although they leave us to guess whether that is because it was liberal or Protestant or Christian.

We all know what has happened. Schweitzer, building on the work of certain German scholars, insisted that the ethical teaching of Jesus was very far from constituting His 'religion.' Such an idea could only be defended by ignoring a large and significant part of His teaching, and by glossing over the true and historical meaning of such phrases as 'the Kingdom of God' or 'the Son of Man.' The Gospel of Jesus must be related to contemporary Jewish hopes of a miraculous intervention of God in worldly affairs, whereby the present order would be swept away and the messianic kingdom established with the Messiah at its head. That is what He believed, and that explains why His teaching was a 'Gospel.' He thought that the intervention of God was imminent, and hence His ethical teaching was intended only to serve for a

[1] *What is Christianity?* pp. 73 *ff.*

brief interval before the hand of God should be revealed. Thus the outlook of Jesus, like that of His Church, was wholly supernatural; there was nothing liberal, or German, or Protestant (might we add, Christian?) about it.

I did not understand at the time, and I have never been able since to understand, the shout of exultation with which Schweitzer's work was greeted in certain quarters in this country. If accepted it would indeed overthrow liberal Christianity, but it would be still more fatal to orthodox Catholicism. Dr. Inge told us in Cambridge that he had read through the Gospels again and he could not believe that Schweitzer's interpretation was justified. He added that the true place for a pure apocalyptist was a lunatic asylum. That is just the point. Apart from the interpretation of this utterance or that, we must surely admit that if the mind of Jesus had been so obsessed by apocalyptic dreams as some writers would have us believe, it is inconceivable that He would have had the influence that history shews Him to have wielded. In fact, a large part of His recorded teaching cannot easily be fitted into the frame of apocalyptic fancy.

The whole question has been much debated in the last thirty years, and perhaps it may be claimed that opinions are settling down. On the one hand, it is generally admitted that the eschatological aspect of Christ's teaching cannot be passed over as unimportant but that it must be given due weight in any estimate of the signficance of His Gospel. It was a *gospel* that He preached, and, as we are so often reminded, 'gospel' means good news and not merely good advice. Moreover, it is not to be denied that the outlook of the early Christians was supernaturalistic, and that ethical teaching, though never wholly neglected, yet had a secondary place in the apostolic preaching. It is difficult to believe that there was no continuity between the teaching of Jesus and that of His Church. But, on the other hand, there is reason to believe that the relegation of the 'liberal' view to the limbo of forgotten things was premature to say the least. Sober scholarship in this country has refused to be carried off its feet, and there are strong reasons for thinking that the apocalyptic school exaggerated at least as much in one direction as did the liberal Germans in the other. An adequate discussion of this question would, of course, demand a book rather than a short paper, and indeed many books have been written. Here I can only remind you of possible solutions of the problem.

1. We may deny that there was any contrast between the Gospel of Jesus and the Gospel about Jesus which the early Church proclaimed. Then we must seek the apostolic *kerygma* in

the Gospels on the assumption that the early Christians must have derived their beliefs from their Master. That still remains a hard task. It is quite true that the influence of the *kerygma* is discernible on the Gospels, and the form-criticis have taught us that the evangelists related many incidents and recorded many sayings with the express purpose of illustrating the Gospel of the Church. But that is not quite the point. It is a very remarkable thing that although the Gospels were written in order to illustrate the *kerygma*, and judging by the Pauline epistles and the speeches in *Acts*, the earliest Christian missionaries were not primarily concerned to set forth the ethical teaching of Jesus, the Gospels themselves are full of it. That can only mean that in the preaching of the early Church the balance was changed, and if, despite a comparative lack of interest in the early days, so much of the ethical type of teaching has been preserved in the Gospels, we must conclude that it predominated in the teaching actually delivered by Jesus Himself. If there was any exaggeration of one aspect of our Lord's teaching in the presentation by the evangelists, there can be no doubt which aspect must have been exaggerated. The early Church was deeply interested in Jesus the divine Saviour, soon to be revealed in the majesty of His power. Inevitably the expectations of the evangelists and their contemporaries must have influenced their selection of material. It would be indeed surprising if they had not given to many a saying and parable a turn to bring it into line with their own presuppositions, and some considerable passages, such as 'the Little Apocalypse' of *Mark* xiii, may not be authentic utterances of Jesus at all.

Admittedly, this is a dangerous line of argument, and the temptation to reject as unauthentic what we do not like is one against which every critic must be on his guard. But the point is this: if there are two apparently irreconcilable elements in the recorded utterances of Christ, and one of those elements can easily be explained as due to extraneous influences, while the other bears every mark of originality, it is a reasonable conclusion that the balance has been disturbed by the influence of presuppositions in the minds of His biographers. A study of Jewish apocalyptic suggests such extraneous influence, and for that reason it is hazardous to assume that all the supernaturalism of the apostolic writers can be justified by reference to the teaching of our Lord Himself.

2. Or, secondly, we may go to the other extreme, and say that the Gospel of the early Christian Church was not representative of the teaching of Christ at all, that the Apostles turned a simple spiritual and ethical movement into a kind of mystery religion in which the risen Christ became a cult deity. This theory goes back

It least to Julian the Apostate, and it is not without defenders to-ay. But it is intrinsically improbable, and it is not supported by he evidence. A growing consciousness of the mystery of Jesus' erson is discernible in the earliest of the Gospels, and it is quite ncredible that the Apostles who had lived with Jesus and known im as a human prophet could suddenly have raised Him to the ank of a divine being, even if due allowance is made for the in-luence of the belief in the Resurrection.

3. A third possibility is that the preaching of Jesus was indeed ainly ethical and spiritual, but that it contained an undercurrent f supernaturalism which justified later developments. Few to-day ould appeal to the discourses of the Fourth Gospel as embody-ng the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus, but it may yet be true that they epresent a historical element in the teaching of the Master which he fourth evangelist has isolated and exaggerated. Even in the ynoptic Gospels the Person of Christ occupies the centre of the icture, and although too much stress should not be laid on the he 'Q' saying of *Matthew* xi, 27 and *Luke* x, 22 ('All things are elivered unto me by my Father, and no man knoweth the Father ave the Son and he to whom the Son willeth to reveal him'), yet here are very many passages in the first three Gospels which make r imply personal claims on the part of Jesus which are not to be ightly set aside. That He was influenced by the messianic expec-tations of the time is not disputed, and most scholars admit that He accepted the title of Messiah. No doubt His was a transmuted schatology, freed from the materialistic and nationalistic elements f contemporary Jewish messianism; but it was still there, and His se of such terms as 'the Kingdom of God' and 'the Son of Man' cannot be divorced altogether from the expectations of His day. Messianism was the mould into which flowed His conscious-ness of a supernatural authority; and although we must beware of ascribing to Him all the eschatological ideas of the time or even of the later Christian Church, this element cannot be ignored in determining the nature of His Gospel.

I commend to you this third solution of our problem, a solution which I believe to be in accordance with the evidence and in essential agreement with our historic faith. Jesus was not just one of the prophets, although he stood in line with the great moral teachers of Israel. We may admit that He had much in common with Amos, with Isaiah, and with Jeremiah, and yet we must acknowledge the truth of the verdict that 'never man so spake.' On the other hand, He was no fanatical dreamer who went about proclaiming the approaching end of the world with all the fanciful accompaniments of Jewish apocalyptism. He spoke of

common things to common people, and He spoke a language that they could understand. Yet no one thought His preaching commonplace, and from the first His hearers were as much impressed by His Person as they were inspired by His message or astonished at His works. Moreover, there can be no doubt that His was a gospel of hope. He taught the people to look forward. God's hand would be revealed, and that shortly, so that they must stand ready with their loins girt and their lamps burning. There was a good time coming, for God's Kingdom was about to be established, but not all and sundry, certainly not all Jews, would enjoy the blessings of that Kingdom. No doubt the identification of the Kingdom with the Christian Church is an idea that emerged comparatively late, but it may nevertheless be a true interpretation of the Gospel of Jesus. By His life, His death, and His resurrection, Jesus did introduce a new era in human history. He established the Kingdom of God. Never again could the world be what it had been before. For those who responded and 'believed' life had obtained a new quality and a new meaning. God's rule had been established in the Society of Christ.

It is true, therefore, that, in the old phrase, 'Christianity is Christ.' We find in the teaching enshrined in the Gospels the truth about God and the guidance which the world needs for the ordering of its life. The Gospels are full of 'good advice,' the best advice ever given. But good advice did not found the Church in the first century and it will not save the world in the twentieth. Two other closely related factors must be taken into account, the place of the divine Christ in the scheme of salvation and the expectation of the establishment of the Kingdom. Christianity is, and always has been, a supernatural religion. That does not mean that we are committed to the uncritical acceptance of all the miracle-stories which circulated in the early Church. They must be judged in the light of the evidence and in accordance with the ordinary canons of historical criticism. But the fact remains that Jesus made upon His contemporaries an impression which led them to believe and publish such stories, and the culmination of the Fourth Gospel, when Thomas exclaims 'My Lord and my God,' represents the verdict of Christian experience.

As to the future, the early Christians were mistaken in the form of their hopes, and nothing is gained by a refusal to admit that much of the traditional eschatology of the Church is only a survival of the messianic hopes of the Jews. Yet these hopes are not valueless so long as they are capable of being translated, and they serve to remind us that Christianity is a profoundly optimistic religion. It rests upon a belief that God has intervened in human

history for the good of His creatures, and that in the last resort the future rests in His hands.

Nor is the transference of much of the Church's hope from this world to the next wholly without justification. No one who reads the Gospels with attention can maintain that the Christian faith is without relevance to human life as lived in this present world. Its influence on individual, social and political problems must be far-reaching. Yet it remains true that here we have no continuing city. If in this life only we have hoped in Christ we are not indeed of all men most miserable, for others who have not this hope are much worse off; but for the full and final consummation of our expectations we must look beyond this present life. The other-worldly element is essential to our faith, and despite a reverent agnosticism concerning matters of which we can have no certain knowledge, we may still believe with St. Paul that 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.' So much we have learned from Jesus and His Gospel.

THE PARABLES AND POETRY OF JESUS

By the Rev. N. S. Power, M.A., Vicar of Immanuel Church, Highter's Heath, Birmingham.

> 'Beauty is one of the fundamental attributes of God which he has impressed upon his world. I hold it to be a quality residing in the objects and not imparted to them by the observer. I hold beauty to be, like Truth and Goodness, an end in itself.'

THESE words are taken from Dean Inge's book *Faith and its Psychology*, and the chapter entitled 'The Aesthetic Ground of Faith.' In this chapter Dr. Inge gives convincing reasons for this belief. He recalls that beauty and the consciousness of beauty are so infinitely deep-rooted in the universe that inanimate nature is, without exception, beautiful, and that even lower forms of life, such as insects, are conscious of it and attracted to it. He recalls that many of the world's greatest minds have believed that, in Plato's words, there is 'Beauty absolute, separate, simple and everlasting.'

It is as absurd to suggest that this beauty is born in the mind of the beholder as to suggest that the majesty of Shakespeare's poetry is created by the schoolboy who stumbles through *Macbeth*

for the 'School Cert.' It is as absurd to dismiss this beauty as the by-product of physical processes as to dismiss *The Testament of Beauty* as a by-product of metal, paper and printer's ink.

There are some who would have us believe that there is no more in a sunset than difraction of light by dust. Many of us would add :

'Shall I not see this sight?
Who tells me dusty skies
Divide the racing light
To charm my soul with lies?

It ill becomes a man,
From God knows what up-thrust
To turn from such a plan
Or scorn distorting dust.

The God whom I revere
Speaks from the dusty sky
And in my soul I hear
His whisper — "It is I."'

If this be true, a true faith, which embraces all truth, all goodness, and which claims and satisfies the mind of the believer, must satisfy the thirst for beauty too. A true faith — and this is the theme of Dr. Inge's book previously quoted — must claim and satisfy the whole being and the whole life.

If God is as much the God of Beauty as of Truth and Goodness, then to tolerate ugliness should be as abhorrent as to condone cruelty; and if this is true, then in Him in whom we claim to see more fully than in any other the nature and purpose and love of God, we should expect also to see God's beauty.

No one would claim that in the Best-Beloved Son we see the *whole* of God's wisdom or of his power. That would not be compatible with the limitations of a truly human life. This limitation of a human life must be kept in mind as we discuss Christ's parables and poetry. We must remember the artistic limitations of Judaea, where literature was the only tolerated artistic outlet apart from music of a sort as yet little known. We must remember that Jesus had so much to achieve by his ministry in so short a time that we ought not to expect his artistry to be more than a divine grace natural to him rather than conscious craftsmanship — though, as C. F. Burney has shown, the craftsmanship was there. Again, the disciples did not preserve the sayings of Jesus for their aesthetic but for their moral qualities. They would probably not have recorded the most sublime lyric if it had no didactic value. That

but makes it the more amazing if in Him we can see

> 'The glory as of the only begotten of the Father,
> Full of Grace and Truth.'

It is undeniable that Christ has proved an unfailing inspiration in every branch of art. We can see this in the earliest Christian literature, in St. Paul's hymn to Love; in that superb passage in the *Epistle to the Hebrews* which ends, 'But thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.' We can see it in the works of modern masters, and a large anthology could illustrate it only partially. We can follow it in Bridges' *Testament of Beauty*:

> 'From cadence to cadence the long dolorous way
> Of the great passion of Christ.'[1]

The whole *Testament of Beauty* is relevant to this contention.

What manner of man is it from whom so great a river of creative beauty has flowed with incomparable grandeur for two thousand years? Surely this question is relevant to that implicit in our subject—whether Christ can satisfy the craving for the beautiful which a true faith must assuage. The Poetry of Jesus cannot be confined to the utterances of his own lips, though it is with these that we are chiefly concerned.

From the *Arabian Nights* to *Kai Lung* the told story has a great place in Eastern literature, and the moral story was one of the main outlets of Hebrew creative genius. Says the *Jewish Encyclopaedia*:

> 'In the *Talmud* and *Midrash* almost every religious idea, moral maxim or ethical requirement is accompanied by a parable which illustrates it.'

The moral story and the true allegory, says B. T. D. Smith, originated in *Mashal*—a saying with more than apparent meaning:

> 'Is Saul also among the Prophets?'
> 'Out of the strong came forth sweetness'
> 'The Fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge.'

These are 'Parable-Seeds.' There are some Old Testament examples of early flowering—Jotham's parable of the Bramble in *Judges* ix, 7, for instance, and Nathan's parable of the Ewe Lamb.

The origin of the parable—these ancient riddles or elaborate metaphors (it is especially from the implied representation of the metaphor that the parable has grown)—may help to clarify the purpose of the parabolic method.

The meaning of the *Mashal* is not always apparent, but there is something unforgettable about it, so that when the meaning is

[1] See, too, Book I, lines 771-780.

realized, it too is never forgotten. Jesus made constant use of *Mashalim*, witty sayings varying from brief analogies such as 'Physician, heal thyself' to 'Parable Germs' like the wine and wine-skins, or miniature parables such as the story of the wise and foolish builders. I did not fully realize until I began to prepare this paper what an extraordinary gift of imagery he had.

In his thirty-three full-length parables Jesus raised this literary form to a height never before approached and afterwards imitated but never surpassed. In spite of the occasional misinterpretation of those who handed them down, and, doubtless, some alterations and confusion, they have an inner unity and consistency and bear the hall-mark of supreme religious genius.

It is often asked why Jesus used this parabolic method. In part this is answered by the instinctive Jewish use of *Mashalim* to illustrate religious teaching. But this does not explain the sudden use of the full parable. The first stage of Christ's ministry attracted vast crowds of whom many, no doubt, came merely to gape at his cures rather than understand what his mission was.[2] It was such a crowded assembly which, in the earliest Gospel (*Mark*) witnessed the transition from Popular to Parabolic teaching. The Parable of the Sower, which is really about Four Kinds of Soil, not only marks but explains this transition. It is, in contrast to the usual custom, criticism of pew from pulpit, of audience by speaker. The teaching does not vary, but, for various reasons, the response does. It is the quality of the hearing which determines the fruitfulness of the teaching. The division of the soil—of the audience—into four classes was, by the way, traditional. The Rabbis recognized among their scholars the Sponge, the Funnel, the Strainer and the Sieve.

The popularity of Jesus was spoiling his mission. With such crowds, eager for spectacle and careless of teaching, he knew he would have no abiding influence. He must teach in such a way as to select those willing to understand, open to learn and capable, when taught, of winning others. He must turn from the crowds too big for one man to manage to train teachers for the crowd. These teachers Parabolic teaching could select.

The purpose, then, is selective, not secretive. It is to bring to his side potential apostles, men and women in whom the teaching can bear fruit and who, in their turn, will proclaim from the housetops what is spoken into their ears. Ultimately the change was to benefit the crowds, who may have felt, at the time, that the

[2] *The Mission and Message of Jesus*, pp. 68-9.

Master's words were no longer for them. It was not meant to exclude them permanently from the Kingdom.

This, I believe, is one of the best single answers to the question why Jesus used this method. And yet . . . no answer could be complete. Dr. A. B. Bruce begins his book on the Parabolic Teaching with the words 'The Parables of our Lord were of an incidental character.' Many of them are not comprehended in the selective purpose of the first parable. B. T. D. Smith classifies them under every variety of figurative speech. After all, a good point in religious teaching is unforgettable if enshrined in a story or image and can be deadly prosaic if barely stately. Every preacher knows that no one will notice if he preaches the same sermon a hundred times so long as the illustrations are different, but let him repeat an anecdote and everyone will remember.

The teaching of Jesus sparkled and blazed with imagery, sometimes of infinite tenderness and appeal, sometimes of biting scorn. 'Whited walls . . .,' 'graves which appear not,' 'go tell that Fox . . .' It roused passionate devotion or bitter hatred, but assuredly—let it be inscribed on every pulpit—it never bored a soul for a single second. His longest recorded sermon takes exactly eleven minutes to utter and contains twenty-eight illustrations varying from 'Cast not your pearls before swine' to the parable-germs of the 'Mote and the Beam,' the 'Treasure in Heaven,' the 'Father giving good gifts to his children' and the 'Wise and Foolish Builders.' And apparently the sermon was largely spontaneous.

The images used by Jesus are homely and bring us very close to the lives of the pious poor of Galilee. We find peasant farmers tilling their fields with the help of their sons and a few servants, hired labourers paid tenpence a day. The steward of an estate is an important person. A lamp can light up a whole house and the lamp was no brighter than a candle. The loss of a sheep or coin is a serious matter, garments are carefully patched. A fatted calf makes a great feast, and a feast usually marks a wedding or celebration and is a tremendous event. The shadows of poverty and debt are never far away.

Thus did the good news of the Kingdom of God come into the world—a treasure of priceless worth blazing and glittering in earthen vessels such as its hearers used every day.

The problem of the Fourth Gospel allegories is too big for discussion here; they certainly resulted from the inspiration of Christ and his Gospel, but whether he can be said to be, in any

sense, their literary author is another matter. Divergencies in the Synoptic parables have led to the question whether, in these too, we must hesitate.

No one would deny that the formative period of oral tradition did have its effect. I remember at the Loughborough conference seeing speakers reading with no little astonishment what the local paper recorded of their addresses on the previous day—a valuable lesson in form criticism and the ways of editorial redactions. Many that day who might have come near to sound teaching 'could not come near for the press.'

A good example of our uncertainty is the fig-tree of unhappy fate which seems undecided whether it is real or allegorical. But the divergencies are more readily explained if we remember that the stories Christ told would be the most memorable part of all his teaching and therefore the last to be recorded. The Synoptic authors, faced with a wealth of material, probably selected what suited their purpose and edited it accordingly. Thus, in *Mark*, we have the pattern-parable of the Sower, parables of the Kingdom (which is the great theme of the first two stages of Jesus' teaching in *Mark*) and the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen, which is in the Passion Teaching stage.

'Q' has no major parables. This may be because it took shape before there was need to record the most widely remembered part of Christ's teaching, or because it was intended to be a collection of non-parabolic ethical precepts. Of course, it sparkles with illustrations which are sometimes parable-germs — the 'blind guides,' the 'treasure in heaven,' and the 'trees known by their fruits,' to name only a few.

Matthew's Gospel follows Mark's closely where parables are concerned, but the parables of the Kingdom are added to and edited, and we have in addition the eschatological parables of the 'Wise and Foolish Virgins' and 'The Talents.' Matthew's Gospel was more affected than any of the others by Jewish apocalyptic, and that influence is visible here. Manson writes:

> 'One is left with the suspicion that the parable (of the Ten Virgins) as presented by *Matthew* is the working-up of something much simpler, in the same way that his parable of the "Wheat and Tares" is the working-up of Mark's parable of the "Seed Growing Secretly."'

In the parable of the 'Sheep and Goats' we seem to have the same mixture of the original teaching of Jesus, identifying himself with suffering humanity, and echoes of the popular eschatology of the *Book of Enoch*. Especially in 'M' (that part of Matthew's Gospel which is neither *Mark* nor 'Q') we find echoes

of Rabbinical sayings and the influence of John the Baptist's expectation of a sharp division of the good and evil at an imminent and spectacular Parousia. The parable-germ of the Drag-net, which was probably intended by Christ to suggest the inclusiveness of the Kingdom, is used to teach a sharp—an impossibly sharp—distinction between the good and the wicked which John longed to see.

Even John the Baptist's characteristic phrase 'generation of vipers' is found on the lips of Jesus in 'M' but nowhere else in the New Testament. 'M,' then, is a source to be treated with reserve. It seems to have originated in the Christianity of a small, compact, persecuted, but very Jewish Church in Judaea, a Church with an impossible missionary task, but buoyed up by the lively hope of an apocalyptic 'Second Coming' when justice would be done. Mr. Punch has observed that the smaller the Public School the brighter its tie. We might add that the smaller the Church, the more violent its apocalyptic expectations.

But even in these parables peculiar to *Matthew* is it so hard to separate the daring, original ideas of Christ from the echoes of current popular beliefs?

It is in Luke's Gospel that the best-loved parables are to be found and it is here that the problem of their source is most interesting, especially as fourteen parables are in 'L' (that part of Luke's Gospel which is neither *Mark* nor 'Q'). These are the parables in sharpest contrast to the usual religious teaching of Christ's time and nation and therefore the most likely to be remembered by the poor and outcast, by women and perhaps by some who were children when they heard his voice, showing as they do Christ's passionate sympathy with the unhappy, the weak, the outcast and the despised.

I believe that in many of these 'L' parables we have eye-witness accounts of the actual stories told by Christ in his teaching; daring, original, hardly influenced at all by contemporary thought just because they contradicted it so utterly. This is confirmed by C. F. Burney's analysis of the parallelisms and rhythms typical of Aramaic poetry.

Approaching the problem of sources from this angle, the impression is received that *Matthew* kept fairly closely to his written sources but that something has happened to 'M,' and that *Luke* used a good deal of blue-pencil in editing his written sources but swallowed wholesale oral information, with results sometimes glorious and sometimes a little unfortunate.

These 'L' parables, including the 'Good Samaritan' and the 'Prodigal Son,' are the most easily remembered and widely known of all Christ's teaching. They could easily have been derived, Manson suggests, from Christians Luke met at Caesarea during Paul's detention there in about 60 A.D. This is corroborated by the Polemic character of much of 'L'—subtle rebukes of Scribes and Pharisees which must have originated in Judaea and which would have been remembered with glee by those whom Jesus defended against their mighty adversaries. We can picture the Pharisees listening with complacent satisfaction as Jesus began the well-known tale of the godly pillar of respectability and the literally god-forsaken tax-farmer— and their horrified indignation when traditional rôles of the characters were brilliantly reversed. We can picture the glee of the crowds when the great ones had departed discomfited. The outcastes who found a champion in Christ —as do their fellows in every generation—would not forget such stories.

Some have ascribed them more to Luke than to Christ. The evidence is all the other way. Besides, if all the original and glorious things that Jesus said were invented by his followers, why on earth was Christ crucified and why did his disciples live and die for him in radiant certainty that He was their living Lord?

It is hard to understand those who persist in believing that Christ is the supreme unveiling in human history of the mind and purpose of God, and yet who refuse to credit him with ability to tell a good tale or to rise above contemporary apocalyptic fallacies, zealot nationalism or Jewish exclusiveness. The true marvel is that, despite the extent to which his followers shared these ideas, we have so much evidence of Christ's transcendence of them.

Is it not more reasonable to suppose that Luke was the most Christian of the Synoptists and chose from the wealth of anecdotes and parables available those sayings which show Christ as the supreme genius he is? Here we have little contamination by apocalyptic preconceptions or Jewish nationalism. *Luke*, as we know, 'dearly loves a good miracle.' It is a small failing beside his virtues.

His purpose was not only to transform the crudely told story of *Mark* and the ethical precepts of 'Q' into a book of superb literary quality, but to reveal Christ more fully than had been done before as the breaker-down of barriers between men and women, between Jew and foreigner, between the sinner and his God. The evidence was there, and with consummate skill he chose it to suit his purpose. 'There is hardly an anecdote, a parable, peculiar to

uke which breathes not the spirit of mercy and appeal to sinners,' rites Renan,[3] and Bruce remarks that if we look for Pauline in- ience, it is there; but not the influence of the dogmatist so much the Paulinism of the missionary who broke down barriers of tional exclusiveness to spread the saving Gospel across the rld, the Paulinism of the old man in prison who had pity on a naway slave.

There is little time for any attempt to appreciate the parables religious teaching. For depth of meaning, for insight, for sim- icity and economy of words, for sheer poetic beauty, there is thing like them in the world. Like Him who spoke them, they e alive for evermore, and one constantly finds new truths in the miliar lines, a message amazingly apt to our own time.

Have you noticed, for example, that in the story of the Good maritan we know something about all the characters save one? he Priest and Levite were snobs and hypocrites; the Thieves ere cruel and evil; the Innkeeper was kind and hospitable; the maritan we know and love. But the wounded man — what was ? Good or evil, kind or devilish, Jew or foreigner? We know thing except this—he was a man in need, and as such he claimed d received the Samaritan's Christian love. What else he may ve been, Jesus clearly regarded as irrelevant. Is not the clamant ed of mankind in our time that men and women and children ould be treated according to their human needs, and not accord- g to irrelevant considerations of race or political ideology? Is t the Samaritan calling to us across the centuries that if we uld follow Christ, then by the strength of compassion we must eak down these suicidal barriers which threaten to divide man- nd once more into hostile camps?

And the character of the Elder Brother in the 'Prodigal Son' how he epitomises the virtues and besetting sin of good, religi- s, God-serving people! Has not he a word to say on the official titude of the Mothers' Union, for example, to the victims of oken marriages? But there is no need to do on. One has only to l the parables to one's Sunday School as nearly as possible in e way in which Jesus would tell them to-day—in modern words th modern details — to discover anew that they are the best ries of their kind ever told.

Although mostly incidental in character and colloquial in nner, there is a harmony about these parables, as about all the yings of Christ, which reflects the runic quality of Hebrew litera-

[3] *Les Évangiles*, p. 266.

ture at its best. In the story of the 'Wise and Foolish Builders' for example, we have synonymous and antithetic parallelism combined — strophe and antistrophe answering line for line in perfect metrical structure.

Perhaps for sheer brilliance there is no parable to equal that told by Christ in the presence of Pharisees who were already plotting his death about the mistake they were making in that very plot, the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen who forgot that although invisible, the Lord of the Vineyard was a living reality whom they disregarded at their peril. When the heir was killed the husbandmen thought there was no one left to take action. Jesus *makes* his audience consider the Lord of the Vineyard as a person who would not remain indifferent.

> 'But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir—come, let us kill him. . . . What therefore will the Lord of the Vineyard do?'

The questions of an Eastern story-teller expect an answer, which the audience is not usually slow to provide. Dare I conjecture that *Matthew* has the original version here and that the answer 'He will come and destroy the husbandmen,' came, not from Jesus—it is too crude and obvious for that—but from some naïve young Pharisee who had not grasped the implications of the story or from some lesser being who delightedly had?; and that, with a smile and a shake of the head, Jesus gave his own answer, an answer cryptic but burning with truth, an answer to drive its meaning into the very souls of his hearers as they pondered the unforgettable words, so rich in symbolism and allusion:

> 'The stone which the builders rejected
> The same was made the head of the corner;
> This is the Lord's doing
> And it is marvellous in our eyes.'

The Pharisees had forgotten that you can't kill incarnate love if it is the love of a living God — just because they had ceased to regard God as a living and active reality. It was a supreme effort to pierce their spiritual blindness and save them from themselves.

The true parable does seek to arouse insight in its hearers. 'It demands,' says Manson,[4] 'a moral judgement on the behaviour of the characters in the story, and on the basis of that judgement it issues its challenge to faith and life.' 'How think ye?' 'What judgest thou?' 'Answer me this' — that Jesus used this method reveals his belief that, beneath the sins and follies of mankind, the

[4] *The Mission and Message of Jesus*, p. 325.

ivine spark was there to be kindled by the divine flame of truth nd love in Him.

The use Christ made of metaphor, simile, allegory and image typical of the true poet. We have seen, too, his use of parallelms or strophe and antistrophe. A good example is the passage escribing the Queen of the South and the Men of Nineveh dging his own generation. Here we have the 'rhymed thoughts' pical of Hebrew poetry, as we know from many Psalms.

We know, too, that despite two translations and the didatic urpose of the Gospels, many of the sayings of Jesus have come us as sheer poetry.

> 'Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.
> They toil not, neither do they spin;
> And yet I say unto you
> That even Solomon in all his glory
> Was not arrayed like one of these.'

fter countless repetition the words are still beautiful. B. H. treeter said of this passage:

> 'Here is an aesthetic judgement, simple, penetrating, sublime; and it is expressed in an aesthetically perfect phrase. . . . The standard of taste implied is one which most moderns would accept as obvious; but at the time it was new and even revolutionary. It is the one aesthetic judgement of His which has been preserved; but it implies the possession of perfect taste.' [5]

Equally lovely is the Lament over Jerusalem and the bitter rophecy of the doom of the cities of Galilee.

But did Jesus create poetry in a more technical sense? C. F. urney, in his book *The Poetry of our Lord*, writes that, despite ariant readings, some of the Sayings have so marked a poetic yle that he concluded that either those responsible for the tradion had somehow independently framed his words in the parallelms of Hebrew poetry and in the same characteristic style—which absurd—or that it might not be rash to hope that some of the ayings of Christ have been preserved in the very form and words e used. In judging the actual rhythms used by Jesus, Burney was elped by the relationship in Hebrew and Aramaic poetry between arallelism and rhythm.

Day	unto day	uttereth speech
And night	unto night	sheweth knowledge

ompare:

Whoso exalteth	himself	shall be abased
But he that humbleth	himself	shall be exalted

[5] *Reality*, p. 206.

This, and 'Matthew's' fidelity to his Markan source and therefore most probably to 'Q,' encouraged Burney to reconstruct in Aramaic the poetry of Christ.

The Lord's Prayer, for instance (Matthean version), when re-translated, was found to be a poem or hymn of two three-line stanzas with four beats to a line and rhyme, such as is not used in formal Hebrew poetry, like the *Psalms*, but which is found in folk songs and poems.

Burney's evidence is overwhelming, and one is forced to conclude that in a highly technical, as well as the general sense, Jesus created poetry. No doubt he had, as a subsidiary motive, a desire to make his teaching memorisable. But great poetry needs no utilitarian justification. It is written because the soul of the poet must create or die. Burney shows how textual criticism corroborates his belief that where the poetic style is purest we are nearest to the actual words of Christ.

It is not surprising that Jesus was a Poet, that the supreme creative personality should clothe thoughts of profound insight in words of chiselled simplicity and utterly satisfying beauty. In that artistic form in which his nation excelled Jesus is supreme. His poetry has survived with many of the very harmonies and images that burned their way into the minds of those who first heard them, bearing the truth of God on the wings of their loveliness.

God grant that, in our time, men may have their ears open to hear and minds to receive those words, that in this their day they may know 'those things which belong unto their peace' before their house 'is left unto them desolate.'

Main books used :

B. T. D. Smith: 'The Parables of the Synoptic Gospels.'
Bruce: 'The Parabolic Teaching of Christ.'
Trench: Notes on the Parables.
Renan: 'Les Evangiles.'
Major, Manson and Wright: 'The Mission and Message of Jesus.'
Streeter: 'Reality.'
Inge: 'Faith and its Psychology.'
C. F. Burney: 'The Poetry of Our Lord.'
Bridges: 'The Testament of Beauty.'

THE PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF JESUS

By E. L. Allen, Ph.D., D.D., Lecturer in Divinity, University of Durham.

IT is obvious, surely, that we do not have direct access to the personality of the historical Jesus; we know Him only in and through the impression which He made on His first disciples and such portions of their recollections of Him as have been incorporated in our New Testament. Our thankfulness for what has come down to us is therefore tempered somewhat by uncertainty as to how much we have lost. The saying 'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' and the incident of the woman taken in adultery, have survived by so slight a chance as to suggest that there is much more we cannot hope ever to recover. But what is true of the New Testament applies also to every attempt to re-tell the Gospel story or to delineate the central Figure in it; this involves selection according to individual interest, and selection necessarily carries with it some loss. Let it be understood, therefore, at the outset that this paper makes no claim to be exhaustive, that a personal valuation lies behind it, and that some things may well be omitted which others would include.

We have three sources on which to draw in any attempt to sketch a portrait of the Master. We must, of course, take full account of the self-revelation in His words and in His actions. But we shall learn much if we can penetrate behind these to that total attitude to life out of which both alike spring. A person makes himself known, not only by what he says, but also by what he does not think it necessary to say, what he takes for granted, the standards of judgment which are implicit in everything he does but which he never takes time to formulate. The Sermon on the Mount, for example, becomes particularly illuminating when we consider what the Speaker must have been in Himself to make such demands on the quite ordinary people who composed His audience. In what follows, therefore, I shall refer from time to time to the presuppositions of the work and teaching of Jesus, and not only to the work and teaching as such.

The point of view from which I propose to handle the material

is that any personality of really outstanding quality has its own inner logic and is capable of synthesizing features which in others would fall apart. He is a living unity of what would be opposed, apart from his power to hold them together: it is precisely this which gives to such a person his richness and makes his appeal a many-sided one. Only the small nature can be compressed into a formula.

In the first place, then, we have in Jesus the combination of an imperious moral authority and a gracious attractiveness. It was said of Him at the beginning of His ministry that He spoke with authority and in His presence men felt that He was born to be obeyed. He made the most exacting demands on His followers; they must not merely be ready for suffering should it be thrust upon them, they must take up the cross and follow Him, in other words, volunteer for martyrdom. When He set His face to go to Jerusalem, there was a determination in His eye which made the disciples shrink back amazed: it was hardly safe to be with such a Man, for whither might He not lead them? With critics sitting all around Him, He spoke the word of forgiveness to the man laid at His feet, careless what indignation it might rouse against Him. Whatever attitude we may take up to the nature-miracles, the fact remains that He was of so commanding a stature that men did not find it hard to believe that he had muzzled the storm with a word. He moves through the Gospels an essentially royal Figure: He bids men forsake all and follow Him, and when they ask to be excused He goes on and leaves them to the consequences of their denial.

Yet there is nothing in the least harsh and forbidding about Him; in fact, all our evidence goes to show that He was singularly attractive. Far too often have the people of Galilee been accused of fickleness: so long as Jesus was in His own province, His countrymen crowded to hear Him, and it was not they who drove Him out, it was Herod Antipas. In the last week at Jerusalem, those who had resolved to be rid of Him had to preserve caution, lest the crowd, already favourable to Him, should be excited to a passionate outburst by the suspicion that He was being plotted against. The glimpses we get of His relations with children suggest that He was one to whom mothers would gladly bring their little ones and that they themselves were quite at home with Him. Much as He had in common with the Baptist, so that He could think that what applied to John's authority would be equally true of His own, He was in one respect opposed to Him. Jesus was no ascetic, His imagery was often taken from the banquet or the wedding, and He was perfectly at ease in social intercourse. He had

ose characteristics which might easily have repelled, but in fact le attracted men to Him.

In the second place, we see in Him a combination of the most xacting standards for conduct and the most generous judgments pon others. I shall not cite here the attacks on the Pharisees, be- ause I suspect that these are to a large extent coloured by the nimosities which developed between Church and Synagogue after ne Master's death. But He had no polite words to waste on a ruler uch as Herod Antipas; he was a fox, and Jesus called him such. 'hat He could be swept along at times by a powerful moral indig- ation is shown by the cleansing of the Temple, though He must ave known that He was exposing Himself to grave peril by so hallenging an action. Or take the sayings on purity in the Sermon n the Mount: these are intelligible only as the utterance of One 'ho was Himself so utterly pure that the slightest taint on the nagination was as reprehensible as an overt act. Or in what He ays about cutting off the offending member that the whole self ay be saved, does He not reveal the fact that for Him half- easures were simply inconceivable? He at least could accept no ower aim for life than that of being perfect as the Heavenly 'ather is.

Yet at the same time He seems again and again to act as one 'ho is altogether careless of His reputation, if not as one who is beyond good and evil' in some sense. The charge most fre- uently brought against Him was that of moral laxity. He was so areless of the company He kept! How could He be a man of od, surrounded as He was by such strange associates! Actually o tolerate the presence near to Him of a woman of the streets! hen, too, how He bent the Sabbath-law to His purpose when ome trivial reason for breaking it presented itself to him. I once ook a Jewish rabbi through the second chapter of *Mark*, and it was ost interesting to get his comment at the end. 'Making religion asy for sinners!' he said; 'Jesus says that if you find the Law too ifficult for you, you needn't take it seriously!' That was pre- isely how the Pharisees reacted to Him in their day. We are so sed to thinking of Jesus as our moral example that we forget that he best among His contemporaries thought of Him as a danger- us person who played fast and loose with elementary moral dis- inctions.

In the third place, we have in Jesus the striking combination of sense of crisis and urgency on the one hand and, on the other, omplete freedom from anything remotely like fussiness or nxiety. It is clear that He felt that His coming was an event of ecisive significance in the history of His people, that it was no-

thing less than a life-and-death matter for them. Hence He did not hesitate to ask for self-sacrifice and the renunciation of every hindrance, while in the Parable of the Barren Fig-tree He pressed home upon his contemporaries that, if Israel rejected Him, she must look for no further chance. In the Parable of the Unjust Steward what He does, I take it, is to upbraid His hearers for failing to realize that crisis is upon them; when He sends out the Twelve, they are to go as men carrying the fiery cross through a Highland glen. So much is at stake that the rich man must give up all; so stern is God's judgment that it will take cognisance of thoughtless words and not merely of dereliction in duty. To hear Him and forget what He said is to invite disaster; it is to build one's house upon the sand.

Yet Jesus moves through the various scenes in His life-story as one who is inwardly untroubled and who possesses that peace which He is so concerned to commend to others. In the Sermon on the Mount He speaks of anxiety and of how one can be free from it, not as we must do, as though He were Himself in the grip of that of which He speaks, but as one who has quite overcome it. Indeed, there seems to lie behind those words a calm of soul to which we can never attain, for it scarcely seems to have been troubled by the disquiet with which we are all too familiar. There is a leisureliness about Him; He is never hurried, He seems always to have time for people. How many memories of country life had He not stored up in the years before His ministry began! Even after all these centuries we feel in reading the Gospels something of that deep quiet of soul which was His, that peace which the world can neither give nor take away. Yet it co-existed in Him with the consciousness that His task was urgent and His opportunity brief, therefore not a moment must be wasted.

In the fourth place, we find in Jesus a very definite unity and solidarity with His people and their tradition combined with a sovereign freedom over against them both. I think we have to admit that He did say once that the Torah was eternal, though I cannot think that He used such language as that of the jot and tittle otherwise than in a figurative sense. But He understood Himself and His mission in terms of the people from whom He sprang and He bent Himself to win them for the Kingdom of God. He did not work for humanity in some vague and general sense, but for the men and women of His own time and His own nation: He was the Reaper sent by God to gather in the harvest of the seed sown long before in Israel and kept alive through the centuries. He used the symbolism of the Messianic Banquet and spoke of His own kingship in terms of the 'one like unto a son of

man' in *Daniel* vii, and if we cannot follow *Matthew* in an express imitation of His mission to Israel, it would seem that He regarded what he was to do for the world as needing Israel for its instrument. He spoke from within Judaism even when He said what was bound to disrupt and transcend it. If there is anything which modern study of the Gospels has made clear, it is that Jesus spoke the language of a particular people and a particular epoch and that the eternal in His message is expressed in the thought-forms which these furnished.

Yet I doubt whether we have yet done justice to the daring liberties which Jesus took with what had come down to Him from the past. He criticizes the Sabbath laws, not because something vital is at stake, but because they interfere with the desire of His disciples to satisy their hunger while walking through the countryside. In the Sermon on the Mount, He does not oppose His teaching merely to the tradition of His people, He calls in question what it has accepted for centuries as divine revelation itself. He pits *Genesis* against *Deuteronomy* in a fashion which laid Him open to the charge of picking and choosing; what He was actually doing, of course, was to bring the most sacred institutions of His people before the tribunal of His own conscience and His own intimate knowledge of God. In the last resort, He would reverence them only where they could pass the test; the inner voice which spoke in His soul had more authority than the contents of the Law. How much more, then, could it supersede the traditions of the elders. In a few scathing words He sweeps away all their casuistry and lays down some new principle of such clarity that it has become a rule of life for multitudes ever since. Yet in its origin it was the bold assertion of an individual conscience.

Finally, we see in Jesus how a strong sense of His own significance can combine with the humble acceptance of all that He has and is as the gift of God. There is never anything apologetic about His attitude: He does not argue, He makes claims of the most sweeping character. Behind all His life is the knowledge that, while others have known God as King, it is His privilege to know Him as Father. It is not correct, as I see it, to say that Jesus had no place in the Gospel which He preached: to believe in God, to repent and accept His Kingdom, meant to follow Him. I think too that He was conscious that He had brought into the world something which could not be restrained within the limits of Judaism, a new wine which would shatter the old wine-skins once it had been poured into them. When He stood before the High-priest, He declared without hesitation that death would not be the end of Him, that beyond death He would come again, clothed

with the authority of God himself. The Sermon on the Mount gives expression to the consciousness that in Him Israel has come to a more momentous turning-point than when Moses gave the Law on Sinai. He speaks and acts for God in the world.

The Fourth Gospel insists on this aspect of the life of Jesus far more than the Synoptists do, though there is evidence enough in them. John indeed goes much too far and makes Jesus actually proclaim His Godhead in the streets of Jerusalem: in so doing he is anticipating the controversies between Church and Synagogue towards the end of the first century, when this was the point at issue. But it is very noticeable that John is more insistent than the Synoptists on the human dependence of Jesus on God, as a son upon his father. If Matthew found it necessary to modify the saying in *Mark*, 'Why callest thou me good? There is none good save one, that is, God,' one wonders what he would have done had he been called upon to incorporate the Fourth Gospel in his work. For there it is stated in the plainest language that the Son can do nothing of Himself but what He seeth the Father doing, and that He acts only as the Father commands. The paradox of the character of Jesus comes out most strongly, however, in the saying which Matthew has preserved, and in which Jesus invites His hearers to come to Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart. Jesus had attained to such self-detachment, to such subordination of Himself to God, that He could do what is normally impossible and speak of His own humility without pride.

I have followed so far a certain scheme in the presentation of my thesis. To operate further with it would be to run the risk of imposing one's own preconceptions on the material to hand. I shall therefore content myself with speaking briefly of some points at which the originality in the character of Jesus seems to me to stand out most clearly.

Here, of course, one must speak of His attitude to women. This is in striking contrast with the rabbinic teaching on the subject, as also with the reluctance of even the compassionate Buddha to imperil his order by allowing such unaccountable creatures to enter it. There is a delicacy about that story in *John* viii which sets it quite by itself in the literature of the ancient world; Jesus knows how to elicit the best from the woman without for a moment glossing over her offence. His forgiveness of her has power to transform her. Only slightly inferior to it in beauty is that incident in the house of Simon (recorded in *Luke*), or that scene at Bethany when a woman's love discerned what was hidden from the disciples' eyes, that in Him who sat before her was the Deliverer of her people. In his friendship with Martha and Mary, Jesus has left us

An example of a relationship which has appeared again and again in Christian history and has called out the best in both parties to it. John shows how well he understood his Master when he makes Him reveal Himself without hesitation to a woman by the well-side; where the disciples are surprised that He finds conversation permissible He is prepared to disclose His deepest secret. The story of the Early Church shows us how what Jesus did was perpetuated by His Spirit in the work of His disciples in this respect.

Then perhaps something should be said about the reticence which is characteristic of Jesus and so very un-Oriental. It is Oriental to say one's prayers when the time comes wherever one is: the Lascar seaman spreads his mat towards Mecca and says his prayers, quite oblivious of the passengers who may be standing about it. But Jesus shrank from that; there was something in it suggestive of self-display, and He counselled rather the inner room and the secret offering of the heart. Perhaps, too, there is something of this behind *Mark's* theory of the Messianic secret; certainly Jesus had no love for publicity; He did not wish for notoriety as a wonder-worker, but preferred, like the Servant of the Lord in *II Isaiah*, neither to strive nor cry nor to lift up His voice in the street. When we come to the story of Emmaus, we read that at the end of the journey Jesus 'made as though He would go further,' and that He required to have pressure put upon Him before He would consent to join His companions at their meal. What delicacy of feeling is suggested by those words! He will not impose Himself in any way, will not take an invitation for granted, but waits till it is tendered Him.

We find something of the same attitude towards people in His replies to His questioners. On such subjects as the tribute-money or His claim to authority, it is a mistake to suppose that He is evading His critics. Rather is His method something like that of Socrates: He will not supply them with ready-made answers, but seeks to stimulate them to think for themselves. He deals with His opponents, that is to say, as He does with the publican and the sinner, inasmuch as He refuses to impose Himself on them in any way but is concerned to draw out what is best in them. Indeed, I can think of no better way of drawing to a conclusion these remarks on the personal characteristics of Jesus than by saying that while, all too often in the history of religion, faith in God and faith in man have been opposed to each other, in Jesus we see one for whom the two were perfectly fused.

JESUS AND HIS PASSION

By the Rev. J. K. Nettlefold, M.A., Rector of Bitterley, Salop.

JESUS and His Passion. The subject of this paper is historical. Its first purpose is to answer the questions, Did Jesus foresee his sufferings and death, and if so, how did he interpret them? If God had ordained his suffering and death, then what did Jesus believe that these would accomplish for mankind? But another question underlies this, a question of history which is also a question of doctrine. It is this. What have Jesus' suffering and death actually accomplished, what have they meant to generations of Christians, what do they mean to us to-day. What is their true interpretation? The answer to this question is the doctrine of the Atonement, which will be the conclusion of this paper. I would remind you now of a famous description of the doctrine, as a standard with which to compare our own beliefs. It comes from 'The Pilgrim's Progress.'

> 'Now I saw in my dream that the highway up which Christian had to go was fenced on either side with a wall. Up this way therefore did burdened Christian run, but not without great difficulty, because of the load on his back. He ran thus, till he came to a place somewhat ascending, and upon that place stood a Cross, and a little below, a Sepulchre. So I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up with the Cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back; and began to tumble, and so continued till it came to the mouth of the Sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more.'

The load on Christian's back was the burden of his sins. The sight of the Cross loosened it. It rolled down into Christ's Sepulchre, and was seen no more. That is what Jesus' Passion meant to Bunyan. It is scarcely likely to mean exactly the same to us. But Bunyan's earnestness and sincerity are a challenge. We are face to face with one of the great mysteries of our religion, and must try to give an answer as earnest and sincere as his own.

And now for the first question. Did Jesus foresee his own suffering and death, and if so, how did he interpret them? Did he foresee them? Yes. For there was likelihood from the beginning that his work would bring him to a violent death. He began his public ministry when John the Baptist was put in prison, and John was beheaded before the Crucifixion. What was always probable had become a practical certainty when Jesus made his last journey to Jerusalem. He was leading a forlorn hope, in F. C. Burkitt's

phrase, and he knew it. An oracular saying recorded in *Luke* makes this plain:

> 'I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished' (*Luke* xii, 50).

The logic of events had convinced Jesus that to fulfil his mission he must probably die a martyr's death.

> 'And they were in the way, going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed; and they that followed were afraid' (*Mark* x, 32).

But what reason did Jesus see in God's will thus revealed to him? What did God intend that his Passion should accomplish? The Synoptic Gospels give us two answers. First, that as the Messiah, Jesus believed that he must fulfil Isaiah's prophecies of the Suffering Servant. And second, that at the Last Supper he said that his life was a sacrifice.

First, Jesus fulfilled Isaiah's prophecies of the Suffering Servant. The Passion narratives certainly echo *Isaiah* liii. And Christians made great use of this chapter in explaining the necessity of Christ's death. But did Jesus himself interpret it in the same way? Did he also apply it to himself, or is this an instance where the evangelists attributed to him what was only their own discovery? Of course it is impossible to give an incontrovertible answer. But it is only right to point out that if the apostles could see the extraordinary aptness of *Isaiah* liii, then there was nothing to prevent Jesus seeing it before them. He declared that it was his mission to renounce glory, to be a servant and to serve. And to confirm this echoes from *Isaiah* often came to his lips. In the synagogue at Nazareth he read from *Isaiah* lxi, and applied it to himself. The verses in the Sermon on the Mount commanding non-resistance, as reported in *Matthew*, echo *Isaiah* l, a Servant passage. But the most convincing instance is Jesus' prophecy of the Passion in *Mark* ix, 12. The prophecy is in general terms, and therefore unlikely to be the work of Christian apologetic. 'How is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be set at nought?' Son of Man is the Messianic title Jesus preferred, and used more often than any other. But there is no passage in Scripture saying that the Son of Man must suffer. Suffering belongs to the Servant, not to the Son of Man. The natural explanation is that Jesus had so fully accepted the Suffering Servant prophecies as to be fulfilled by himself that he instinctively thought of his messianic mission in those terms. Why was it God's will that in order to complete his work as Messiah he must die a violent death? He found one answer in the 53rd chapter of *Isaiah*.

Before proceeding to consider the Last Supper and its evidence that he regarded his death as a sacrifice, there is one more famous utterance of Jesus to examine. *Mark* x, 45 : 'The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.' The underlying thought is inspired by *Isaiah*. The Son of Man serves, he gives his life, and for many. *Luke* has a very similar saying without the word ransom : 'I am among you as he that serveth' (*Luke* xxii, 27). This is certainly authentic; it was characteristic of Jesus to interpret his mission as the renunciation of glory and the offering of service. Of course it is the word ransom, a word not in *Isaiah*, that raises argument. Ransom, a price paid by one person in order that another may go free. Those who desire an entirely objective doctrine of the Atonement, a doctrine according to which God and Christ do all, and man does nothing, can find it here. In later Jewish literature the idea of one man being a ransom with God for another was not unknown. *Psalm* xlix declares it impossible : 'None can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him.' Did Jesus speak this word about ransom, and if he did, did he mean all that it can imply? The first question remains open. I answer a decided 'No' to the second. Few are professors of theology and required to use the language of strict logic. We know that the good deeds of others benefit us. Christian faith assures us that God is always reaching down to us, to give us His grace. How easy for one with a passionate faith in God, and about to give his life for mankind, to fail to mention that man must co-operate, if God is to redeem him; how easy to feel that the work of God is all. 'With God all things are possible (*Mark* x, 27).

We pass on now to consider the evidence of the Last Supper. And first, one point from the Rev. P. Gardner-Smith's candid and judicious book, *The Christ of the Gospels*. The Last Supper is in one respect just one example of what Jesus and his disciples had often done before; they used to eat their supper together. It is worth noting how many of the Resurrection appearances are connected with a meal, in Galilee, at Emmaus, in Jerusalem. The feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand confirm, what is in itself very probable, that this was the custom of Jesus and his disciples in Galilee. When we read in the first chapters of *Acts* that the Christians continued steadfastly in the breaking of bread, they were carrying on a custom which Jesus had begun.

But in other ways what Jesus said and did at the Last Supper was different. His words and actions had a special meaning. He made the bread and wine symbols of his death. How did he mean them to be interpreted? We have three independent accounts of

the Last Supper, in *Mark*, *Luke* and St. Paul. To consider *Luke* first; most scholars judge the shorter text to be the better one, which ends abruptly with the words 'this is my body,' puts the cup first, and omits the words 'do this in remembrance of me,' words that come from St. Paul, and do not belong to the Synoptics. Next, I follow Dr. Vincent Taylor, in his excellent book *Jesus and His Sacrifice*, in thinking that we have the general meaning of the rite in the verses that follow later, 27-30; these complete Luke's account of the Last Supper, and give us Jesus' interpretation in his own words. 'I am in the midst of you as he that serveth.' His death was part of the service he was rendering to God, for man's salvation. So far is simple. The real difficulty comes with the interpretation of the words 'this is my body,' and 'this is my blood of the covenant which is shed for many' (*Mark*), or 'this is the new covenant in my blood' (St. Paul). Clearly there is here no doctrine of transubstantiation. The disciples, with Jesus sitting beside them, cannot have supposed that he meant the bread actually was his body, or the wine his blood. But it is likely that Jesus meant more than that the bread and wine were only signs of his life to be surrendered to God on the following day. The Hebrew prophets had been in the habit of using signs to reinforce their prophecies; and they believed that such signs had power to bring about what they foretold. But Dr. Vincent Taylor goes further. In explaining the bread to mean his body he says, 'Jesus had sacrificial practice in mind. . . . It is difficult not to think of the sacrificial meal which normally was the final stage in the Old Testament sacrifices. . . . We must infer that Jesus uses the term "body" because he looks upon his Passion as an offering for men in which they are invited to share' (*Jesus and His Sacrifice*, p. 121).

The reference to the Old Testament sacrificial system is made clearer by the word covenant spoken over the cup. The Hebrew people had been made the People of God through the covenant He made with them on Mount Sinai. There, when the animal had been sacrificed, some of the blood was first offered to God, and then sprinkled on the people. 'Through it the people share in the blessings and powers which it conveys' (*Jesus and His Sacrifice*, p. 137). If the analogy is to be pressed, then Jesus meant that the disciples by sharing the bread and wine would share too the spirit, in which he was surrendering his life to God for the salvation of mankind.

These ideas, or ideas like them, seem to have been in Jesus' mind at the Last Supper. It is true that in his lifetime sacrifice was no longer a vital part of the religion of Jews in Galilee. And although Jesus would read of sacrifices in the Old Testament, he

would read there very little to explain their purpose or meaning. For Hebrew religion mostly took them for granted, as God's will. Yet Jesus' words and acts at the Last Supper demand explanation. The most convincing explanation is that Jesus meant by them something like what has just been outlined.

How did Jesus interpret the meaning of his Passion? Our conclusion is, first, that under the inspiration of Isaiah he saw it as part of his service to God for the salvation of mankind. Second, that he regarded his death as a sacrifice, like the sacrifices of the Old Testament. At the Last Supper he believed that in giving the disciples the bread and wine he was offering them the means of sharing in his spirit, by which he was giving his life for men. Whether Jesus intended that they should continue to celebrate the rite after he was gone, we cannot say. It is more likely that everything that would follow his death was to him a mystery, which he left to God.

But if we ask the further question, did Jesus believe that his death for men would be effective without any effort on their part, did he believe that the disciples through sharing in the bread and wine would automatically receive his spirit too? then the answer must be emphatically 'No.' Jesus believed in the power of God's grace. The Sermon on the Mount assumes that God is always near at hand to help. Without this assumption the teaching is impossible, even sometimes a little absurd. But he also saw the problem of conduct from the human side. Man must co-operate with God if His grace is to save him. On this point the clearest teaching Jesus has given us is the parable of the Prodigal Son. The father goes out to meet the son, and welcomes him home. But the son has also done something; he has come to himself, and returned to his native land. The parable is only an illustration. We cannot argue from it which comes first, man's repentance or God's grace. Neither can we trace the boundaries of God's work and man's response. 'We cannot draw the mystic line, what is human and what divine.' It is also likely that human freedom has very narrow limits, as modern psychology suggests. But if human freedom is altogether denied, then religion and morality are destroyed.

It is time to attempt an answer to our second question. How are we to interpret Jesus' Passion? It is time to sketch a doctrine of the Atonement. The demand is often made to-day for an objective doctrine of the Atonement. The phrase is cant, when used without an understanding of its meaning. If the meaning of objective here is that God and Christ save men without any desire or effort on men's part, then the argument of this paper is that it is

o be rejected; it is destructive of religion and morality, and contrary to Jesus' teaching. But in another sense every doctrine of the tonement must be objective, for its basis is the suffering and eath of Jesus, which are as objective as anything can be. The octrine is objective also in another sense. The Atonement is the ork of God; it is God intervening in human history; Jesus is both od and man. Next, any doctrine of the Atonement that is Christan must insist, in its divine aspect, that the Atonement is the ork of both Christ and God, or, to use the language of St. Paul, ne work of God in Christ, 'God was in Christ, reconciling the orld unto Himself' (*II Cor.* v, 19). Jesus called God Father. It s contrary to his teaching to describe the Atonement as a transacon between God and Christ, between the divine love and the ivine justice.

To turn now to the human aspect of the doctrine. How does esus' Passion become effective for us? How are we saved? Every eligion promises men salvation, and all the promises contain the ame two elements. Religion offers men two things, truth and ower. It tries to teach us the truth about God and to give us the ower to serve Him. Both elements are present in the Atonement. esus' Passion is the supreme manifestation of God's love for an. God is like Jesus. This is the aspect emphasized in the ourth Gospel. Philip said, 'Show us the Father.' Jesus answered im, 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father' (*John* xiv, 8). To how men the truth about God is a large part of giving them the ower to serve Him. To know how God loves us stirs us to gratiude, and to love Him in return. Here the Atonement passes into the ncarnation. Jesus' Passion is part of his life on earth, perhaps the ost striking part, at any rate the part which has most struck the hristian imagination. Jesus gave himself entirely to God's serice, for the saving of men. And we can contribute to the salvation f mankind. At the Last Supper Jesus invited his disciples to hare in his work of redemption. The Atonement is not God's ork alone; it may be our work too. St. Paul said, 'I fill up what s lacking of the afflictions of Christ' (*Col.* i, 24). And Jesus said o James and John, 'The cup that I drink, ye shall drink.' If this spect of the Atonement were more emphasized, Jesus' Passion ould be better understood and would receive a fuller response om human hearts.

And so we come to the last aspect of the doctrine, one which s often stated in such a way as to be quite unmeaning. Jesus' assion reveals the sinfulness of man. Jesus was the best man ho ever lived, man in God's likeness, man as God intends him o be. And he was condemned to death as a criminal. Yet those

who put him to death were not worse than other men. They were quite ordinary people. The Passion is proof that we live in a wicked world. We are guilty not only of our own personal sins, but also of the sins of the world in which we live, and in whose sins we share. It is all the worse that our consciences are quite untroubled by most of these sins. We do not know the wickedness of what we do. For what possibility of reform is there for us if we do not know what in us needs reformation? The worst lie is 'the lie in the soul.' 'If the light that be in thee is darkness, how great is that darkness?' (*Mat.* vi, 23). The Passion convicts the world of sin. It should take away our pride and self-complacency, and humble us before God. In doing so, it sets us on the way to redemption. For we cannot with God's help correct our faults until we know them.

Jesus' Passion can give us a sense of sin. But the sense of sin is often so misconceived as to be quite outside average human experience, with the result that the release from sin offered by the Atonement is unmeaning. This is largely true of Bunyan's famous description quoted at the beginning of this paper. In his allegory, Christian toiled up the hill with great difficulty, because of the load of sins on his back. The sight of the Cross loosed the burden. It rolled away into Christ's sepulchre, and was seen no more. This is unintelligible to most people because they do not feel the burden of their sins. And for a very good reason. The sense of sin which used to be common was really much more the fear of God, Who was believed to be severe and terrible, and the fear of Hell. To-day, a more Christian doctrine of God has made people less afraid of Him. They do not fear Hell so much either, as they did, for instance, in the eighteenth century, when Bishop Butler could find in the millions of seeds that die, compared with the one or two that take root, an analogy with the numbers of the damned and the saved. With Bunyan himself the sense of sin was largely the fear of God, as his autobiography, *Grace Abounding*, proves. He became sure of his conversion as he found Bible texts promising God's grace and mercy. He believed he was saved as his fears of God grew less. To-day, these fears have been so lessened or removed that the sense of sin has lost the exaggerated and even hysterical form which they gave it. It develops now as the religious life grows and deepens. It is keener among saints than among sinners.

The hero of a famous novel by Frenssen said that for him sin came too soon in Christian teaching, and forgiveness too late. We talk to children, and to grown-up people too, about sin before they know what sin means. The release from sin offered by the Atone-

ent is therefore also unmeaning to them. We should begin with od's forgiveness, that is, with His love. This was Jesus' own ethod. He compared his disciples in Galilee to the sons of the ide-chamber, and himself to the bridegroom.

Few to-day are to be frightened by the fear of God or of Hell. he Christian religion must appeal to man's love, not to his fear. nd to make man love, he must be shown something truly worth ving. This is Jesus' life, including of course that notable part of his Passion. 'God in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himlf.' 'God so loved the world, that he gave His Son' (*John* iii, 16). nd joining together God's work and man's in a single phrase, We love God, because He first loved us' (*I John* iv, 19). This is r me the doctrine of the Atonement. What more is required?

JESUS: HIS RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION

By the Rev. L. B. Cross, M.A., Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford; Vice-Principal of Ripon Hall.

STUDIES of the historical validity of the claim that Jesus rose from the dead, and of the nature of the resurrection, have therto paid disproportionate attention to an examination of the counts of the post-resurrection appearances and accompanying enomena given in the Gospels; little attention has been paid to e significance attached to the resurrection itself in the earliest hristian writings. The latter approach is, however, of immense portance, as the fact that the resurrection had a significance to e early Christians surely implies an experience of which it was expression, and from an examination of the one it should be ossible to gain some insight into the nature of the other. It is orth noticing that these two different approaches are to be found the New Testament itself. The writers of the Synoptic Gospels e interested only in providing evidence such as they thought oved the resurrection to have been a well-authenticated fact retold by Jesus; they are not interested in its significance. St. aul, and the compiler of *Acts*, pay little attention to events, but e fact of the resurrection and its significance are central in their itings. The author of the Fourth Gospel attempts, not too ssfully, to harmonize these two points of view.

In this paper, therefore, I propose first to examine St. Paul's tters and to discover, if possible, what significance he attached

to the resurrection. Clearly, in a paper on so large a subject, w cannot hope to get more than a cursory view of his teaching on th resurrection, for it is woven into his whole theology; in his ow words, 'if Messiah[1] hath not been raised, then is our preachin void.'[2] The obvious starting point is of course *I Cor.* xv, but I d not propose to begin there, for, though these famous verses give summary of some of his views on the resurrection, they are to large extent limited by the special enquiries which had been mad by the Corinthian community. So many passages in St. Paul' letters bring out the significance of the resurrection that it is diffi cult to find any one which is more expressive of his whole vie than any other; but I would suggest that we start our investigatio with a passage from *Romans*, ' who was delivered up for ou trespasses, and was raised for our justification.'[3] Here in thi summary of St. Paul's atonement-theology lies, I think, the key t his thought on the resurrection. Atonement and resurrectio throughout his writings are inseparably connected, but it is th resurrection of Messiah which is the final answer to all his soteri ological problems.

Burning with a sense of sin, his own and that of the world, an bitterly resentful of death which he considered to have been con sequent upon it (though neither was God's original destiny fo man), he traced them back to the Fall, 'as through one man si entered into the world, and death through sin; so death passe unto all men, for that all sinned.'[4] Adam, through disobedience had frustrated God's purpose for man, though only for a time That purpose still held; the tree of Life which man might hav eaten of was still in Eden, though he had perforce been expelled Many years of sin and sorrow followed for the human race, an always death in the end. But there were bright spots even in th past, men who had not transgressed after the manner of Adam. Of these Abraham was by far the most significant to St. Paul, fo to him God had made a promise, 'to Abraham were the promise spoken and to his seed,'[6] and the promise guaranteed the ultimat restoration of the human race to the divine sonship which they ha lost in Adam's sin: 'it is not the children of the flesh that ar children of God; but the children of promise are reckoned for seed.'[7] As a temporary expedient to save man,[8] God had given th Law through Moses, but that had only made matters worse for th

[1] I propose throughout to use the title Messiah where the text of the Ne Testament has Christ, as this, I think, brings out more clearly the signifi cance which St. Paul found in the resurrection.

[2] *I Cor.* xv, 14.
[3] *Rom.* iv, 25.
[4] *Rom.* v, 12.
[5] *Rom.* v, 14.
[6] *Gal.* iii, 16.
[7] *Rom.* ix, 8.
[8] *Gal.* iii, 24.

ajority, for it served only to emphasize the heinousness of sin,[9] d frustrated rather than helped. But the promise held, as was own by the insight given by God to the prophets into the mystery nbodied in it. But now, in St. Paul's own lifetime, the time had me when God was actually redeeming that promise, 'which he omised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his n, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh.'[10] ne child of promise had come, Jesus the Messiah; the Golden e was about to dawn. It had not dawned yet,[11] for before the ll flood of its celestial light could burst upon mankind, human ture had to be redeemed, and that was still in the process of ing done. For this very purpose the Messiah was human, the titype of whom Adam was the type;[12] his flesh was human, eing found in fashion as a man,'[13] 'of whom (*i.e.* of Israel) is essiah according to the flesh.'[14] He came 'in the likeness of sh of sin and for sin,'[15] because, as St. Paul thought, sin had a rmanent association with the flesh and propagated itself in it. he very nature of Messiah ensured that he could combat the emy on its own ground, 'him who knew no sin he made to be n on our behalf.'[16] Sin could be destroyed and the new relation- ip between man and God established only by the neutralization the flesh, for it stood between man and God, 'flesh and blood nnot inherit the kingdom of God.'[17]

This destruction of the flesh with the consequent blunting of e power of sin to propagate itself in the absence of its old host, ing also at the same time deprived of the tonic of the Law, for is also had now been annulled, was effected by Messiah on the ross. 'Our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin ight be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to n; for he that hath died is justified from sin.'[18] The curse of dam had been neutralized, the antidote to human disease had en found. It was a divine prescription, for it was God who 'con- emned sin in the flesh,'[19] but it was done through Messiah's ath, you 'he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death,'[20] aving blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against s. . . . he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross.'[21] ut the death of Messiah had done more than to negative sin, it had d a dynamic, positive effect too. Human nature had not been ft neutral, it had been infused with a new power, grace; sin was

[9] *Rom.* iii, 20.
[10] *Rom.* i, 2.
[11] *II Thes.*, ii, 2*f.*
[12] *Rom.* v, 14.
[13] *Phil.* ii, 8.
[14] *Rom.* ix, 5.
[15] *Rom.* viii, 3.
[16] *II Cor.* v, 21.
[17] *I Cor.* xv, 50.
[18] *Rom.* vi, 6*f.*
[19] *Rom.* viii, 3
[20] *Col.* i, 22.
[21] *Col.* ii, 14.

being replaced by righteousness in those who identified themselves with Messiah's death. It was as though God had again breathed into man the breath of life. This gift of grace was God's free gift to man through Messiah, and it was almost overwhelming, 'not as the trespass, so also is the free gift. For if by the trespass of the one the many died, so much more did the grace of God, and the gift of grace of the one man, Jesus Messiah, abound unto many; . . . for as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one man shall the many be made righteous.' [22]

To St. Paul the Cross was no accident, the working out of the schemes of evil men; it was part of a cosmic process to which God had committed himself in his promise to Abraham. Though prominent in his theology and vital to it, neither the Cross nor what it accomplished immediately were ends in themselves. The death of Messiah had to a large extent reversed the effects of the Fall; it had done more, it had put human nature well on the road to recovering the divine image in the likeness of which he was made; but death remained a brutal fact, 'if in this life only we have hoped in Messiah, we are of all men most pitiable.' [23] How could men be sons of God, children of promise, if they remained mortal? Besides, the Messiah, the new Adam, had died too; it was no great advantage to 'have known Messiah after the flesh.' [24] 'If Messiah hath not been raised, . . . ye are yet in your sins.' [25] True, he had weakened the power of sin, but to what end? St. Paul's answer was that only a beginning had been made; all that happened in the death of Messiah was but a prelude to the divine drama, which had no mere earthly significance and which was fast reaching its glorious climax. God had raised Messiah from the dead. In great triumph he cries, 'now hath Messiah been raised from the dead.' [26] 'Trust in God which raiseth the dead,' [27] was his answer to those who had morbid fears about Messiah; [28] 'Messiah being raised from dead dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over him.' [29]. What was more, the resurrection was proof that Jesus Messiah was a Son of God, 'declared to be Son [30] of God with power . . . by the resurrection of the dead.' [31] The child of promise had become a Son of God. By the resurrection Messiah had also become Lord of the new creation, and now reigned, seated at the right hand of God, 'according to that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Messiah, when he raised him

[22] *Rom.* v, 15*f.*
[23] *I Cor.* xv, 19.
[24] *II Cor.* v, 16.
[25] *I Cor.* xv, 17.
[26] *I Cor.* xv, 20.
[27] *II Cor.* i, 9.
[28] *I Cor.*, xv, 12*f.*
[29] *Rom.* vi, 9.
[30] No article in Greek.
[31] *Rom.* i, 4.

rom the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly laces, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, nd every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in nat which is come.'[32] Messiah, their Messiah (for all who accepted im were Abraham's seed[33]), was now, through the resurrection, ord of the universe.

The resurrection had liberated the new power which filled not nly this world but the universe as a whole with a new creative nergy; it was something of more than local significance, and it elated to all time. Nor was the effect of the resurrection felt by Messiah alone; by it he had become 'a life-giving spirit,'[34] for 'as n Adam all die, so also in Messiah shall all be made alive.'[35] He as 'the first fruits of them that are asleep,'[36] he was 'the first-born mong many brethren,'[37] 'the first-born of every creature,'[38] 'the irst-born from the dead.'[39] The new creation was for all, and was o be shared by all, both the living and the dead, 'for to this end Messiah died and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the lead and the living.'[40] St. Paul reminds those who have accepted Messiah that they 'have put off the old man with his doings, and nave put on the new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge fter the image of him that created him'[41] (that is, after the image f God): they had already staked their claim in the brotherhood f which Messiah was the Lord. What had happened to him, would appen to them; indeed, it was already happening. In their case, s in the case of Messiah, it was all due to God's direct action, and o God's choice of them, 'for whom he foreknew he also fore-rdained to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might e the first-born among many brethren.'[42] 'He was crucified hrough weakness,' says St. Paul, 'yet he liveth through the power f God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him hrough the power of God.'[43]

St. Paul's constant theme throughout his epistles is this idea of sharing with Messiah the fruits of his resurrection, but there was lways one condition. Before believers can take their place in the new creation, they, for whom Messiah died 'while we were yet sinners,'[44] must first share in Messiah's death. 'If we died with Messiah, we believe we shall also live with him';[45] 'ye died, and your life is hid with Messiah in God.'[46] Believers must not only die, they must also be buried, 'having been buried with him in

[32] *Eph.* i, 19*f.*
[33] *Gal.* iii, 29.
[34] *I Cor.* xv, 45.
[35] *I Cor.* xv, 22.
[36] *I Cor.* xv, 20.
[37] *Rom.* viii, 29.
[38] *Col.* i, 15.
[39] *Col.* i, 18.
[40] *Rom.* xiv, 9.
[41] *Col.* iii, 10.
[42] *Rom.* viii, 29.
[43] *II Cor.* xiii, 4.
[44] *Rom.* v, 8.
[45] *Rom.* vi, 8.
[46] *Col.* iii, 3; *cp.* ii, 20; *Gal.* ii, 20.

baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead';[47] 'we were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Messiah was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with the likeness of his death, we shall also be united with the likeness of his resurrection.'[48] Messiah, and those who had shared his death and resurrection symbolically, were already united in a mystical union, sharers together of the new creation, 'if any man is in Messiah, he is a new creature.'[49] This foretaste of the new creation, this body of Messiah, was the church; 'he is the head of the body, the church';[50] 'for his body's sake, which is the church.'[51] Are we reading too much into St. Paul's theology if we see here a subtle reference to the church as the bride in the new creation, the new Eve, preparing to meet her spouse, the new Adam? In his discourse on the relation of the believer to the Law on the one hand, and to Messiah on the other, using the analogy of marriage, he says: 'Ye were made dead to the Law through the body of Messiah; that ye should be joined to another, even to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God.'[52] The association of the church with the bride of Messiah is much clearer in *Ephesians*,[53] and in *II Corinthians* he says, 'I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Messiah.'[54]

But all this actual and potential new life which came through the resurrection was as nothing in comparison with what was yet to come. However much they might be united with Messiah, however much they might already have partaken of the fruits of his resurrection, they were still in the body.[55] Individuals might be liberated by physical death to find themselves 'asleep in Messiah,'[56] waiting to be 'raised incorruptible,'[57] but the glorious moment was yet to come. Messiah would descend from heaven with his angelic throng, 'with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God.[58] Then, with the inauguration of the Golden Age, the kingdom of Messiah would be established, the new creation would have dawned indeed, and after that its final consummation would not be long delayed. For all this St. Paul yearned;[59] there is an atmosphere of urgency and of expectancy throughout his epistles,

[47] *Col.* ii, 12 *f.*
[48] *Rom.* vi, 4 *f.*
[49] *II Cor.* v, 17. R.V. margin, 'there is a new creation.'
[50] *Col.* i, 18.
[51] *Col.* i, 24; *cp. Eph.* i, 23.
[52] *Rom.* vii, 4.
[53] *Eph.* v, 23 *f.*; *cp.* i, 4 and *Rev.* xxi, 2.
[54] *II Cor.* xi, 2.
[55] *Phil.* i, 23.
[56] *I Cor.* xv, 18.
[57] *I Cor.* xv, 52.
[58] *I Thes.* iv, 16; *I Cor.* xv, 52; *Col.* iii, 5.
[59] *Rom.* viii, 19 *f.*

ren nature groaned in anxious anticipation of the day when the rse of Adam would be completely lifted.

For the benefit of those who were anxious because some of eir friends had died before Messiah had come, St. Paul gives, in uncertain terms, his convictions on the order in which the new eation will be consummated. First, Messiah has been raised om the dead;[60] that was necessary, because he, the life-giving irit,[61] by his resurrection must give life to all. The resurrection, d the resurrection alone, had made available to all the full nefits of the atonement. Next would come the Golden Age, and e times were running out, when Messiah 'will come to be glori-ed in his saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that be-eved.'[62] These would include those who had died, or rather, ose who were asleep in Messiah. They would be raised incor-uptible,[63] and those who were still alive when he came 'will be anged,'[64] and, 'together with them be caught up into the clouds, meet the Lord in the air.'[65] 'Then,' says St. Paul, 'cometh the d, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God.'[66] But, adds t. Paul, there will be a period between the Golden Age and the ge to Come, when Messiah will reign, 'for he must reign till he ath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall e abolished is death,'[67] and in anticipation of that glorious time hen the last curse of Adam would be done away, he proclaims, hen shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swal-owed up in victory.'[68] During the Messianic Age, apparently, the nal judgement would take place, 'for we must all be made mani-est before the judgement-seat of Messiah,'[69] 'the day of wrath nd revelation of the righteous judgement of God.'[70] Of what ould happen to those who were in Messiah, St. Paul had no oubts; they were safe. 'Ye are Messiah's, and Messiah is God's.'[71] ll they had to do was to wait, 'for his Son from heaven, whom e raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivereth us from the rath to come.'[72] Of the Age to Come, St. Paul says little; it is ne final act in the divine drama when God would gather to him-elf all the sons of his new creation brought about through Messiah, that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of is grace in kindness toward us in Messiah Jesus, . . . for we are

[60] *I Cor.* xv, 23.
[61] *I Cor.* xv, 45.
[62] *II Thes.* i, 10; *cp. Col.* iii, 4 and *Phil.* iii, 20.
[63] *I Cor.* xv, 52; *II Cor.* v, 1 *f.*; *Phil.* iii, 21.
[64] *I Cor.* xv, 53.
[65] *I Thes.* iv, 17.
[66] *I Cor.* xv, 24.
[67] *I Cor.* xv, 25; *cp. II Thes.* ii, 8.
[68] *I Cor.* xv, 54.
[69] *II Cor.* v, 10.
[70] *Rom.* ii, 5; *cp. Rom.* xiv, 10.
[71] *I Cor.* iii, 23.
[72] *I Thes.* i, 10.

his workmanship, created in Messiah Jesus.'[73] This would be the time when the sons of God would be revealed[74] as 'heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Messiah,'[75] 'partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.'[76] The surrender of Messiah, together with those who had been created in him, would be the final scene in the completion of God's age-long purpose for man, to make him in his own image; 'then shall the Son also himself be subject to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all.'[77] The harvest of God, of which Messiah by his resurrection was the first-fruit, would have been gathered in, the seed promised to Abraham would have been harvested. That was the significance of the resurrection to St. Paul, in his own words, 'having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Messiah, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth; in him, I say, in whom also we were made an heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will; to the end that we should be unto the praise of his glory, we who had before hoped in Messiah.'[78] The whole philosophy of God's purpose in history had been made clear in the resurrection of Jesus.

Having obtained some idea of the significance of the resurrection in Pauline soteriology, we may now ask what had caused St. Paul, the persecutor of those who called upon 'the name of the Lord Jesus,'[79] to reach these conclusions? Fortunately, in this he leaves us in little doubt, for, in answering those who apparently had challenged the truth of the resurrection,[80] he makes it quite clear that his gospel was based on three unimpeachable testimonies, that of tradition, that of the apostles, and that of himself.[81] I propose that we should examine these, not in the order in which he gives them, but in their order of importance to him. First in importance was his own testimony, his experience on the Damascus road; that was the foundation upon which his gospel was built. 'I make known unto you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it was not after man. For neither did I receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Messiah.'[82] He himself had seen Jesus, the Messiah, raised from the dead; that was sufficient proof for him. To have asked what was the nature of this experience would no doubt have been considered by St. Paul irrelevant; he

[73] *Eph.* ii, 7*f.*
[74] *Rom.* viii, 19.
[75] *Rom.* viii, 16.
[76] *Col.* i, 12.
[77] *I Cor.* xv, 28.
[78] *Eph.* i, 9*f.*; *cp. I Cor.* ii, 7.
[79] *Col.* iii, 17.
[80] *I Cor.* xv, 12.
[81] *I Cor.* xv, 3*f.*
[82] *Gal.* i, 12; *cp. Eph.* iii, 3.

would probably have answered, if at all, as he did when speaking of 'visions and revelations of the Lord' to others, 'whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth.'[83] However, the whole setting of the incident, its resemblance in certain features to the calls of the prophets, the vocabulary he uses in referring to it, his consciousness of an ever-present Messiah throughout his life, and all he says about the nature of the resurrection-body, make it tolerably certain that he did not claim to have seen Jesus in the way in which the authors of the gospel sources would seem to claim that he was seen by the disciples and others following the first Easter morning. Whatever the exact form which Jesus' appearance to St. Paul may have taken, it would seem that it was a psychical rather than a physical experience, a conclusion with which the author of *Acts* would appear to agree, for blinded men do not see.[84]

Next in importance in St. Paul's mind was the testimony of tradition, which, we have seen, he is careful to point out he was taught after, not before, his conversion;[85] 'I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Messiah died for our sins, according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day.'[86] That was the simple tradition which he first gave to the people of Corinth, and which he himself had received, the milk of the word: 'I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not able to bear it: nay, not even now are yet able.'[87] It was the simple tradition, but it had an important interpretation with it. Twice in the one verse it states that what had happened to Messiah was according to the scriptures. It is here surely that the emphasis lies; the tradition was not just that Messiah died, was buried, and was raised from the dead, but that Messiah's death, burial, and resurrection were according to the scriptures. That was something new which St. Paul had yet to grasp. He already knew that the resurrection was a fact, but he had not yet appreciated its significance. He had persecuted the followers of Jesus for claiming that all that had happened to him was in the scriptures, but now that he had had it all explained to him he saw that it was there, and that the Jesus who had appeared to him was Messiah indeed. What was in the scriptures was a sufficient guarantee to him that it was in accordance with God's purpose. He had, however, yet to find out why all this had happened to Messiah; perhaps that was his reason for seeking the solitude and the inspiration of the desert;[88] others had done it before him. Whether it was there or elsewhere, we have seen from the signifi-

[83] *II Cor.* xii, 1 *f.*
[84] *Acts* ix, 8.
[85] *Gal.* i, 12.
[86] *I Cor.* xv, 3 *f.*
[87] *I Cor.* iii, 2
[88] *Gal.* i, 17.

cance which he attached to the resurrection of Messiah that he applied himself with zeal to the scriptures, and not to the Canon only, but to Apocalyptic and Wisdom literature as well. From them, in the light of the resurrection, he worked out not only a philosophy of history of his own people, but a philosophy of the universe as well. He refined, gave spiritual depth and intellectual vigour to what in the hands of his less educated contemporaries had become, after the manner of the psalmists, a dull, monotonous reiteration of the facts of Hebrew history.[89] It was the discovery that what had happened in Messiah related to the Gentiles, as well as to his own people, that sent him forth to bear on his body 'the marks of Jesus.'[90] His it was 'to fulfil the word of God, even the mystery which had been hid from all ages and generations: but now hath been manifested in his saints, to whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of the mystery among the Gentiles, which is Messiah in you, the hope of glory.'[91] He had solved the mystery of the universe, and he wanted to share it with others, 'that they may know the mystery of God, even Messiah, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden.'[92] Messiah had unlocked the scriptures.

The third testimony to which St. Paul appealed was that of the apostles to whom Jesus had appeared.[93] We need say no more of this than that, in so far as he describes the appearances of the risen Messiah to them in exactly the same language as he describes the appearance to himself, we may safely conclude that he did not think that their experience differed in any way from his own. He cannot have thought in terms of physical appearance as he certainly did not believe in the empty tomb.[94]

St. Paul's 'understanding of the mystery of Messiah'[95] was based, then, on his own experience of Jesus, on the testimony of the scriptures, and on the corroborative evidence of the apostles. We may now turn to the Gospels to see what, if anything, they add to his testimony. Here the first thing which should be noticed is the extremely meagre nature of the material: in each gospel, with the exception of the Fourth Gospel, it is confined to one short last chapter. *Matthew* tells the story in twenty verses five of which are taken up with the apologetic story of the guard at the tomb; *Mark* has eight verses only, plus the twelve of the late ending; *Luke* has forty-nine verses, twenty-three of which are taken up with the long story of the walk to Emmaus; *John*, if we discount

[89] *Acts* vii, 2 *f.*
[90] *Gal.* vi, 17.
[91] *Col.* i, 25 *f.*; *cp. Rom.* xvi, 25 *f.*
[92] *Col.* ii, 2 *f.*
[93] *I Cor.* xv, 5.
[94] *I Cor.* xv, 35 *f.*
[95] *Eph.* iii, 4.

he last chapter, which is almost certainly late, has thirty verses. f we compare these figures with those of the Passion narrative in each of the gospels we shall see how striking the difference is. Had it not been for the significance which St. Paul, the *Acts*, and to a less extent the Fourth Gospel attach to the resurrection, the Synoptic accounts of it would hardly have assumed the importance now attached to them. As I have already said, the Synoptic Gospels do not suggest that the resurrection had any particular significance.

When we come to examine the contents of the resurrection narratives we find several rather unexpected feaures, unexpected in narratives which apparently set out to prove that the resurrection of Jesus was a well-authenticated historical fact.[96] Actually, and that is not surprising, the gospels have no accounts of the resurrection. They confine their attention, first, to announcements that it had already taken place, and, secondly, to accounts of the various appearances of Jesus, though of these *Mark* has none. The object in each case is to give proof, sometimes rather strained, that Jesus had risen from the dead. Strangely enough, the first news of the resurrection is given, not to the disciples, but to the women; it is announced by supernatural beings.[97] In three gospels it is joyfully received; but in *Mark*, we read, 'they fled from the tomb, ... and said nothing to anyone; for they were afraid.'[98] When the disciples receive the news from the women their reactions to it are somewhat surprising. and vary from gospel to gospel. *Matthew* says they went into Galilee;[99] the late ending to *Mark*, that they disbelieved it, as also they disbelieved the evidence of the two disciples returning from the country;[100] *Luke*, that they disbelieved it;[101] in *John*, no comment is made. When, later, Jesus himself appears to the disciples, the effect upon them is even more surprising. *Matthew* says simply, 'they worshipped him: but some doubted';[102] the late ending to *Mark*, that Jesus 'upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen';[103] *Luke*, that 'they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit,'[104] but that Jesus reassured them by eating fish before them, and that on the Emmaus road the two disciples failed to recognize him;[105] *John* says just that the disciples 'were glad

[96] *Acts* i, 3.
[97] Excepting *Mk.* xvi, 9, where it is announced by Jesus; *cp. Jn.* xx, 15.
[98] *Mk.* xvi, 8.
[99] *Mt.* xxviii, 16.
[100] *Mk.* xvi, 11, 12.
[101] *Lk.* xxiv, 11.
[102] *Mt.* xxviii, 17.
[103] *Mk.* xvi, 14.
[104] *Lk.* xxiv, 37.
[105] *Lk.* xxiv, 16.

when they saw the Lord,'[106] though Thomas doubted. Further, despite the empty tomb, the implication of which was that the resurrection was physical, the descriptions of Jesus when he appears are peculiar. *Matthew* gives no detail; the late ending to *Mark* has that 'he was manifested in another form';[107] *Luke* says that 'their eyes were holden that they should not know him,'[108] and that 'they supposed that they beheld a spirit';[109] while *John* represents Mary as mistaking Jesus for the gardener.[110]

So far, then, the main testimony common to the gospels amounts to this, there is no account of the resurrection; the announcement that it had taken place is made by supernatural beings to the women, not to the disciples; they receive it and pass the news on to the disciples, who disbelieve it, and even when Jesus himself appears to them he is not recognized. When we turn to what remain of the resurrection narratives in the gospels we find them no more convincing. All four of them, with the exception of *Mark*, give accounts of what appears to represent Jesus' last charge to his disciples. The only common element between them is the command to preach; *Matthew*, and the late ending to *Mark*, add that the disciples are to baptize; *Luke* adds a discourse in which Jesus explains that his death and resurrection were in accordance with his own prophecy, and that of the law, the prophets, and the psalms, and concludes with a short note on the Ascension, which he has in common with the late ending to *Mark*; in the Fourth Gospel there is no mention of baptism, of Old Testament prophecy, or of the Ascension, but Jesus breathes upon the disciples, giving them the Holy Spirit and power of absolution. It is surely strange that these parts of the resurrection narratives, which purport to provide a second reason for the resurrection appearances, have so little to add to what Jesus is represented as having already told his disciples to do, and that they should fail to agree as to what his final instructions were. Much fuller and far more consistent accounts are found in the body of the gospels on far less important occasions.

Not only do the narratives of the resurrection appearances in the gospels fail to demonstrate convincingly that the resurrection had taken place, or what its object and significance were, they vary from gospel to gospel, and are hopelessly confused in themselves. *Matthew* says that the resurrection appearances were in Galilee, so also does the late ending to *John*; the late ending to *Mark*, *Luke* and *John* place them in Jerusalem. *Matthew* alone has the

[106] *Jn.* xx, 20; *cp.* xxi, 12.
[107] *Mk.* xvi, 12.
[108] *Lk.* xxiv, 16.
[109] *Lk.* xxiv, 37.
[110] *Jn.* xx, 15.

ory of the guard, and, to be consistent, makes the women come o see the sepulchre'; in *Mark* and the other gospels, there being o guard, the women bring spices to the tomb. The description of e supernatural figures which announce the resurrection differs in ch gospel, as also do their numbers vary. There is great con- ision over the empty tomb, and therefore over the nature of the surrection-body, as to whether it was physical or not. *Luke* tempts, as we have seen, to prove that the body was real; he also ys that he vanished out of their sight;[111] *John* seems to think that esus had a physical body or was spirit at will,[112] and so on.

No attempt to harmonize the accounts — and there have been any — has produced anything more than yet another example of ecial pleading; it certainly does not produce more evidence. All is confusion, and the extraordinary lack of detail, indeed, of co- erent information of any kind is the more striking if we compare ie resurrection narratives with those of the Passion. These are ull of detail, and though there are divergencies as between the our gospels, they are comparatively unimportant, and the main acts are the same in all, and they do tell us something. The only conclusion we can draw from a study of the resurrection narratives n the gospels is that their writers simply had not got authentic in- ormation on which to work: indeed, it says a great deal for their standards of honesty and reliability that they did not make up ood stories, as, for instance, the authors of the last two chapers f the Fourth Gospel show signs of attempting to do. The fact is nat they had very little evidence to give, but such as they had they ecorded.

The argument of Form Criticism, that the Synoptic Gospels re largely the product of the inventive genius and imagination of he early church, and that they give us little, if any, authentic nformation about Jesus, seems to me to break down completely ere, where so excellent an opportunity for speculation provided tself. Throughout the Synoptic Gospels their writers are con- tantly embarrassed by what Jesus either did or did not do or say, ut though at times they work their own interpretations into the narratives, for the most part they keep faithfully to their sources. They could have made a much better 'story' of the life of Jesus f, like the author of the Fourth Gospel, they had thrown their ources away and, in the light of contemporary ideas about him, written what he would have said and done had he been the kind of esus they thought he was. It is quite evident that they thought ie was Messiah, but they are very careful not to represent him as ressing that claim, for the simple reason that they knew that if

[111] *Lk.* xxiv, 31, 39. [112] *Jn.* xx, 19, 26 f.

he made it at all, he did not press it. The author of the Fourth Gospel, on the other hand, has no qualms in representing Jesus as openly claiming, not only Messiahship, but divinity. Their embarrassment is also seen in the editorial comments of *Mark*[113] and *Luke* on Jesus' prophecy of his death and resurrection. The former says that the disciples did not understand what he said; the latter that they could not understand 'because the saying was hid from them.'[114] These passages served the double purpose of showing that Jesus expected what happened, and of providing an explanation of why the disciples did not anticipate his death and resurrection too. The Synoptic writers were only too conscious of the discrepancy between fact and ideal. The author of the Fourth Gospel, on the other hand, represents Jesus during his lifetime as speaking openly about his Passion and the resurrection, into both of which he reads a deep doctrinal significance parallel to, but more developed, than that which we have seen in St. Paul. To him the death and resurrection of Messiah were the means whereby the Spirit was to come, and the mystical union between Messiah and the believer was to be finally realized.

The days following the crucifixion of Jesus were stupendous days, and it is surely incredible, however overwrought the disciples may have been, that they should have retained so meagre and so confused a recollection of what actually happened, supposing that the traditional view of the resurrection appearances is historical. The resurrection stories in the Synoptic Gospels, and in the Fourth Gospel, are just the kind of miscellaneous collection of stories as would naturally grow out of the type of psychical experience which St. Paul had. We may be grateful to the Synoptic writers for handing them on without embellishment, but such a confused jumble of evidence is not the kind of evidence a belief in the resurrection could possibly be based on. If the accounts of the resurrection appearances in the Synoptic Gospels have any value at all as evidence, it is to show that, at the time they were written, no authentic information was available. All that remained was legend, such as had grown out of a deep religious experience the nature and occasion of which it is impossible to define; but that it was felt, the evidence of St. Paul, *Acts*, and above all the coming into being of the Church is indisputable.

In conclusion, we may ask how the belief in the resurrection arose, what was the nature of the religious experience in which it was centred? The simple answer is, as I have said, that it is impossible to define; but perhaps we may be allowed to make guesses. Fortunately, in doing this, we have the assistance of

[113] *Mk.* ix, 31. [114] *Lk.* xviii, 34.

Luke's account of the walk to Emmaus, in which the realization of the fact of the resurrection is traced in successive and well-defined stages. We are told that, as the two disciples walked, 'they communed with each other of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, while they communed and questioned together, that Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.'[115] Their conversation was about the crucifixion; it had been a great shock to them, 'they stood still, looking sad.'[116] They had hoped that Jesus was Messiah; 'we hoped that it was he which should redeem Israel.'[117] They were suffering from a deep sense of resentment and frustration; their hopes that the Messianic Age was about to dawn had been dashed. True it was that there had been startling rumours abroad that Jesus had been seen; 'certain women of our company amazed us, having been early at the tomb, and when they found not his body, they came, saying that they had seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them that were with us went to the tomb, and found it empty even as the women had said: but him they saw not.'[118] These rumours had not impressed them; not even the evidence of the empty tomb which they had had first-hand from their own companions. It was when their travel companion pointed out to them how stupid they were, and showed them that everything that had happened to Jesus was foretold in the scriptures, that they began, for the first time, to see some kind of a meaning in what had happened. 'Behoved it not the Messiah to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.'[119] They were thrilled at the discovery; 'was not our heart burning within us, while he spake to us in the way, while he opened to us the scriptures?'[120] What it was they found in the scriptures which led them to connect Old Testament prophecy with Jesus, and gave them so deep a religious experience, it is impossible to say; as we have seen, St. Paul found plenty. But they were still unconvinced; final conviction had yet to come. It came when at supper their companion 'took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.'[121] Then 'their eyes were opened, and they knew him.'[122] They returned to Jerusalem declaring 'how he was known to them in the breaking of bread.'[123]

Here, in this story, we have exactly the same psychological process towards belief as we had in the case of St. Paul, the combination of incredulity, rumour, the testimony of scripture, psychi-

[115] *Lk.* xxiv, 14. [118] *Lk.* xxiv, 22 *f.* [121] *Lk.* xxiv, 30.
[116] *Lk.* xxiv, 17. [119] *Lk.* xxiv, 25 *f.* [122] *Lk.* xxiv, 31; *cp.* xxiv, 16.
[117] *Lk.* xxiv, 21. [120] *Lk.* xxiv, 32. [123] *Lk.* xxiv, 35.

cal experience. It was the last which convinced in both cases. With St. Paul the other experiences had come while he was persecuting the followers of Jesus, and when he was not as yet a receptive subject; but he knew the disciples' claims, and afterwards he accepted what he had persecuted others for holding. The Lukan story adds one further testimony of great interest, in that it associates final conviction that Jesus had been raised from the dead with the breaking of bread.

This suggestion, that experience of the risen Lord had an association with the breaking of bread, is interesting, as it lessens to some extent a possible objection to the view we have put forward that the resurrection appearances were psychical, not physical experiences. That objection, and it seems to me to be a reasonable one, is that psychical experiences relate primarily to individuals, not to groups. That is, I think, borne out, at any rate in religious literature, by the claims of the prophets, and by those of the saints. I speak subject to correction, but I cannot call to mind any example of group psychical experience which resulted in an identical vision by all its members. Now the New Testament claims that that happened in the case of the resurrection appearances; Jesus was seen by individuals, but he was also seen by groups, by the apostles and by the five hundred. Luke's association of the resurrection appearances with a meal to which he gives a strong eucharistic colouring, suggests at any rate a line of investigation.

Time forbids that we should embark on an investigation of the origins of the Eucharist, but there are indications, I think strong indications, that the early followers of Jesus found its chief significance in association with the Second Coming. Whatever its relation to the Last Supper may have been, it was to them a Messianic meal. St. Paul tells the Corinthians: 'As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come.'[124] Luke represents Jesus as saying, 'I will not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God,' and 'I will not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the Kingdom of God shall come.'[125] When we bear in mind the fact that the disciples had, to say the least, associated Messianic hopes with Jesus: that they had partaken with him of common meals: that the last of these fellowship meals, in the light of the circumstances in which they partook of it, had great significance and was pregnant with deep religious experience: that the personality of Jesus as such had left an indelible impression of him upon the minds of those who had known him: and that these men believed in the survival of the individual after death, a fact the significance of which is not taken sufficiently

[124] *I Cor.* xi, 26. [125] *Lk.* xxii, 16; *cp. Mt.* xxvi, 29 and *Mk.* xiv, 25.

into consideration in studies on the resurrection, we have an atmosphere conducive to such an experience. There is interesting evidence of this group-mind of the early disciples in *Acts*, where we read that they came together with one accord, ὁμοθυμαδόν, with one mind.[126]

No doubt all these experiences played their part, a very powerful part, in the growth of the conviction that Jesus had risen from the dead, and that he was God's true Messiah, but what lay behind them? Was it Messianism? The significance which St. Paul found in the resurrection was, as we have seen, deeply rooted in Messianism. Jesus, by his resurrection, linked the Davidic Messiah of the Old Testament with the supernatural Messiah of Apocalyptic literature; but why should that link have been found in Jesus, especially by one who had so violently persecuted his followers? That is the heart of the problem, and we are only shelving the difficulty if we say that the connection had already been made, as indeed it had, by those who knew Jesus. The significance of the resurrection depended on the scriptures, but it cannot be said that their significance depended on the resurrection of Jesus. That is the dilemma with which St. Paul and the New Testament writings confront us. Only when the fact of the resurrection had first been accepted was it possible for St. Paul to build up from the scriptures his philosophy of the universe. Always in our search for the origin of the belief in the resurrection of Jesus we are driven back to a religious experience, whether that of the individual or that of the group, the experience on the Damascus road, or before the Broken Bread. The testimony of others and the scriptures played their part, but it was the appearance of the risen Lord which brought conviction. In the final count, belief in the resurrection of Jesus is a matter of religious experience; St. Paul believed, the disciples believed, that they had seen Jesus, and from that experience came the belief that he had been raised from the dead. There are no proofs that the resurrection was an historical fact; Paul offers none, the gospels offer none, neither does the remainder of the New Testament. It was a matter of religious experience with them, it is a matter of religious experience with us. But prior to that, it is also a matter of faith, of faith in a future life. It was so with St. Paul, and perhaps here he comes nearest to showing us the one foundation-stone upon which all else was built: 'If the dead are not raised, neither hath Messiah been raised.'[127] As St. Paul saw, the problem of the resurrection of Jesus is not an isolated historical problem whether Jesus was raised from the dead or not; it is the problem of God's governance of the universe, the problem of God's purpose in it and in us.

[126] *Acts* i, 14 and ii, 1, 46.

[127] *I Cor.* xv, 13, 16.

THE JESUS OF ST. PAUL

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BEFORE we come to consider in any detail what St. Paul thought of Jesus, his person and his significance, there are one or two observations of a general character which I should like to make, not by way of prejudicing or prejudging theological issues, but to free St. Paul's theology from the prejudice and prejudgment with which it has, I believe, been consistently misinterpreted. If we are to interpret him aright, if we are to do him justice, we must try to get behind later interpretations, and find, if possible, what Jesus meant to him in the light of what he could have meant in the theological background in which he lived, not in that of Chalcedon. We must also interpret St. Paul's conception of the person of Jesus in relation to his whole theology, not in relation to a part of it, for it hangs together to a remarkable degree. His teaching on the resurrection is, as we have seen, inseparable from his doctrine of God, Messiah, sin, atonement; so too is his teaching on the person of Jesus. St. Paul had worked out from his new religious experience a complete philosophy of history, of life, and of the universe, and any one part of the whole has significance only in relation to the other parts. A great deal of what has been written on St. Paul's theology has been based on certain particular Pauline ideas, phrases and words, often in isolation from the setting in which they are found. Ideas such as the sacrificial aspect of atonement, phrases such as 'Son of God,' 'on an equality with God,' 'in the form of God,' words such as 'image,' 'form,' 'fulness' have been considered the main and only clues to his theology; they are of course important, and any interpretation of St. Paul's teaching must take due account of them, but they should not dominate all else.

We must also beware lest we interpret St. Paul too literally. He was a deep thinker, but within the limits of his intellectual environment; he was a magnificent orator, but he indulged in rhetoric and hyperbole; he was a great writer, but we must make allowances for his art; like Shakespeare, he loved antitheses, the dramatic, metaphor, to play on words; he was a great theologian, but his theology was highly coloured by his religious experience and

motions; at times he was something of a mystic, at others an ecstatic, a visionary.

We have seen from our study of St. Paul's teaching on the resurrection how great an influence the Old Testament and other contemporary religious literature had in the shaping of his ideas, and on the form in which he expressed them. It would be possible, without drawing too much upon speculation, to reconstruct from this literature the whole theological background in which he had been brought up: that we know so much about this is a matter of great importance; it is also a rare occurrence in a writer of antiquity. The two contemporary doctrines which are of fundamental importance in studying Pauline theology are those of God, and of Messiah. *Prima facie*, it is extremely unlikely that St. Paul would have tolerated any doctrine of God which was not strictly monotheistic. On the other hand, we must not rule out the possibility of development in his thought. A man of St. Paul's religious genius and experience obviously cannot be tied by the theology of his fathers; but, in associating even incipient Trinitarian ideas with him, we must be careful to do so only if there is no possible other interpretation which can be given to his teaching. To St. Paul, the word Messiah meant Messiah, and unless there are very strong reasons for thinking otherwise, we must interpret it in the sense in which his contemporaries would have understood it, namely, as the person appointed and endowed by God for the special purpose of inaugurating the Golden Age. The word cannot, and must not, be dissociated from its Old Testament and Apocalyptic background.

In my previous paper I endeavoured to show that the main significance of the resurrection of Jesus to St. Paul was that thereby God had restored to man the heritage and the birthright which he had lost in the Fall. The evil effects of the Fall had already been reversed, the opportunity of new life had come to all men in Messiah, immortality and eternal blessedness were assured to those who accepted him. God's age-long purpose was being fulfilled, his promise to Abraham had been redeemed. We must now ask, what manner of man had all this been accomplished through? What was the nature of Messiah? St. Paul appears to have had no doubt that he was human, 'born of a woman, born under the law,'[1] 'born of the seed of David according to the flesh,'[2] 'died for our sins . . . buried';[3] indeed, the reality of Messiah's humanity was essential to the Pauline scheme of things. Equally, he appears to

[1] *Gal.* iv, 4.
[2] *Rom.* i, 3.
[3] *I Cor.* xv, 3.

have had no doubt that the same Jesus was the 'Son of God,'[4] 'the life-giving spirit,'[5] and that 'in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.'[6] Is this nothing more than Pauline antithesis on a grand scale, or is it Pauline hyperbole, or is all that we can say of it that it anticipated the findings of Chalcedon, that the two natures must be acknowledged, 'without confusion, without conversion, without division, never to be separated'? What are we to make of the Jesus of St. Paul? Little of value can be obtained from an examination of the names he applied to him, Jesus, Lord, Messiah, whether singly or in combination, though we may note in passing that by far the most common appellation is Messiah; but that in itself throws little light upon what St. Paul thought of the person behind the title. Even a superficial reading of the epistles would show that, while he undoubtedly does lay emphasis on the humanity of Jesus, it is not the human Jesus, but the living, glorified, risen Messiah who is the real centre of his religious experience. References to the life of Jesus are few; his death and burial, though still significant, are past history; the present and the future are in the hands of the risen Lord. He is the effective Jesus; through him and through him alone came knowledge and experience of God.

It is in connection with his conception of the risen Messiah and of his relation to the believer that St. Paul, for the most part, uses language which would suggest a relationship with God which went far beyond current ideas of both God and Messiah. Jewish eschatology had a heavenly Messiah, and he is referred to in relation to God as 'my son the Messiah,'[7] 'the Righteous One,'[8] 'the Elect One,'[9] but he plays a comparatively unimportant rôle, even in the Golden Age which he was to inaugurate, and he certainly did not occupy the position which Jesus occupied as Messiah in St. Paul's thought. With St. Paul it would almost seem as if God had abdicated, and delegated all authority and power to Messiah in heaven and on earth;[10] though he is very careful in the last resort to reserve the divine prerogative for God.

Is this however more than a superficial view of St. Paul's teaching? Did he really think of the risen Jesus as more than Messiah? Did Sonship with God imply a relationship which made him partaker of the very nature of God, therefore making him different in nature from any other being but God? Was Messiah divine in a sense in which divinity can be predicated only of God?

[4] *Rom.* i, 4.
[5] *I Cor.* xv, 45.
[6] *Col.* ii, 9.
[7] *II Esdras* vii, 27; xiii, 32, 52.
[8] *Eth. Enoch* xxxviii, 2; liii, 6.
[9] *Eth. Enoch,* xl, 5; xlv, 3.
[10] *I Cor.* xv, 25f; *Col.* i, 16f.

As I have said, we must be careful not to ascribe to St. Paul ideas which Jewish monotheism would not have tolerated; and we should remind ourselves that, despite what he says about Messiah, he was not persecuted for preaching his divinity. He was persecuted for preaching a crucified Messiah, a human one; 'we preach Messiah crucified, unto Jews a stumblingblock, and unto Gentiles foolishness.'[11] He would not lightly have preached the divinity of Messiah, and we must not lightly credit him with it.

These assumptions, that St. Paul taught the divinity of Jesus, and that he thought his nature was essentially different from that of humanity, have largely been based on the fact that he applies to him as Messiah certain titles, epithets and descriptive terms such as would seem appropriate only to one who was more than human. Now these assumptions would be reasonable enough if these terms were used exclusively of Messiah, or in a sense different from that in which they are used of others. An examination of the epistles shows, however, that this is not the case. On the contrary, St. Paul uses exactly the same terms of those who were in Messiah as he uses of Messiah himself; indeed, it would have been strange had he not done so, for, as we have seen, the main function of Messiah in Pauline soteriology was the restoration to man of the birthright which had been his from the beginning, and which Messiah himself as the new Adam, was the first to enjoy. What differences St. Paul admits, and they are very few, are of only temporary duration, and would disappear with the dawning of the Messianic Age.

Bearing in mind that St. Paul's main interest was in soteriology, let us turn to a detailed examination of the more important of these terms. St. Paul represents the risen Jesus as differing in body from those who were in him, but was the difference a permanent one? His answer would have been an emphatic negative. Messiah had shared 'the body of our humiliation,' would we not share 'the body of his glory'? Here the answer was, yes; 'who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory';[12] 'we all, with unveiled face, reflecting as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory.'[13] The body of the risen Lord differed from the human body only temporarily, and in the same way as the heavenly body differed from the earthly.[14] The reason for this difference was simple. Messiah had already been raised from the dead; by reason of that same resurrection the body of the believer would share the body of his glory. Messiah was 'the firstfruits of

[11] *I Cor.* i, 23; cp. *Gal.* v, 11.
[12] *Phil.* iii, 21.
[13] *II Cor.* iii, 18; cp. *Col.* iii, 4.
[14] *I Cor.* xv, 35 f.

them that are asleep.'[15] He was the first man of the new creation in which the believer would one day share.

St. Paul does not rest content with generalizations; he leaves his readers in no doubt whatsoever that they would share with Messiah much more than 'the body of his glory.' They would share his status as well. He was the Son of God, so too would they be; 'God sent his Son . . . that we we might receive the adoption of sons. And be cause ye are sons, God sent forth the spirit of his Son into our hear cause ye are sons, God sent forth the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So that thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son';[16] 'as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father.'[17] Because this sonship of man with God was by adoption, while that of Messiah was by right, it did not make it different, 'for whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.'[18] Messiah and his brethren were members of one family; they were more, they were heirs to the same inheritance, the inheritance promised to Abraham's seed; 'if ye are Messiah's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise';[19] 'so that thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God';[20] 'the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Messiah; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be glorified with him.'[21] That the risen believer was to share with Messiah, apparently on equal terms, the body of his glory, his Sonship with God, and his heritage is striking enough, but St. Paul goes further; he is to share the divine Pleroma as well. Of the risen Messiah he says, 'it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell';[22] 'for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.'[23] What St. Paul meant by Pleroma it is impossible precisely to say, but it was to be given to the believer in the same measure as it had been given to Messiah. 'In him ye are made full';[24] 'that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God';[25] 'till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and to the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Messiah.'[26]

[15] *I Cor.* xv, 20.
[16] *Gal.* iv, 4 f.
[17] *Rom.* viii, 14 f.
[18] *Rom.* viii, 29.
[19] *Gal.* iii, 29.
[20] *Gal.* iv, 7.
[21] *Rom.* viii, 16 f.
[22] *Col.* i, 19.
[23] *Col.* ii, 9.
[24] *Col.* ii, 10.
[25] *Eph.* iii, 19.
[26] *Eph.* iv, 13.

These passages show quite clearly that St. Paul believed that those who were in Messiah would share with him on equal terms all the fruits of his resurrection. Only a one-sided interpretation can find in them any justification whatsoever for the view that he thought that the nature of the risen Messiah differed in any way from that of humanity when finally and fully redeemed. Indeed, as I have already suggested, St. Paul's whole conception of God's redemptive purpose in Messiah demanded that man's new nature should be identical with that of Messiah. He certainly believed in the 'divinity' of Messiah, but he believed also in the 'divinity' of those whom he had redeemed when they, like him, had been raised from the dead. St. Paul's interest was not primarily in the 'divinity' of Messiah, but in the fact that he had restored to man the 'divinity' which had been his birthright from the beginning. What man had lost in Adam, he had regained in Messiah. Messiah as "the first-fruits' was *primus inter pares*, but he and those who were his were 'many brethren.' St. Paul does not go beyond the teaching of the Old Testament in any one of these passages. The scriptures stated that man was originally made in the image and the likeness of God;[27] not unnaturally he believed them. That is how he pictured and tried to describe Messiah; that is how he pictured and tried to describe himself and all others who were in Messiah; 'if any man is in Messiah, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away, behold, they are become new. But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Messiah. . . . God was in Messiah reconciling the world unto himself.'[28]

Once we realize the source from which St. Paul drew his inspiration, neither the ideas which he associates with Messiah, nor the terminology which he used in relation to him, fall outside the perspective of the soteriological scheme which he found there. Only in one particular does he seem to go beyond the thought of the Old Testament as a whole. He was convinced, and it was a burning conviction, that the Gentiles were to share with Israel all these benefits which had come through Messiah. It was to this ministry of reconciliation that God had specially called him. In this he found one of the greatest of all the mysteries of the new creation; 'ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Messiah; which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Messiah Jesus. . . . Unto me, who am less than the

[27] *Gen.* i, 26; cp. *I Cor.* xi, 7.
[28] *II Cor.* v, 17 f.

least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Messiah; and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God who created all things; . . . according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Messiah Jesus our Lord.'[29] But does St. Paul go beyond the Old Testament even in this? Surely here also the first three chapters of *Genesis* are still the basis of his soteriology. From them it became quite clear to him that God had never intended that there should be different nations; there were none in the beginning, for nations came into being as a result of Adam's sin; there could be none in Messiah, or in his new creation; 'ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman: but Messiah is all and in all.'[30] 'Ye are all sons of God, through faith in Messiah. For as many of you as were baptized into Messiah did put on Messiah. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female: for ye are all one man in Messiah Jesus.'[31] All national divisions, all religious and social distinctions must go, for there were none in Eden; even sex must disappear, for sex began only when Adam and Eve first knew that they were naked.

We have seen something of what St. Paul thought of the relationship which existed between the believer and the risen Messiah, we may now turn our attention to the Messiah of human experience, to the Jesus of history, and attempt to trace what St. Paul thought of him, of his origin and nature, of what he achieved and of the manner in which it was accomplished; in other words, had St. Paul a doctrine of incarnation? The answer to some of these questions is to be found in his epistle to the *Philippians*; at least here are strong indications of the direction in which his mind was moving, though such indications are by no means confined to this epistle. The passage in question is the one in which he invites the Philippian converts to be like-minded with Messiah; 'Have this mind in you, which was also in Messiah Jesus; who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross.'[32] It is not possible in a paper of this kind to

[29] *Eph.* iii, 4f. [30] *Col,* iii, 10.
[31] *Gal.* iii, 26f; cp. vi, 15 and *Eph.* ii, 11f.
[32] *Phil.* ii, 5-8.

nter into a discussion on the terminology used here by St. Paul: ctually very little of value can be got even out of a detailed xamination of it. He was not an exact thinker, he certainly was ot a metyphysician, nor is he wholly consistent in the use he makes f terms. If we press the meaning of the language which he uses n this passage, all we are likely to get out of it is, either no mean- ng at all, or the one we wish most to find there. St. Paul was a man f ideas, in these he was consistent, but for the most part, he threw em out in whatever terms came to him, though at times, it would ppear that he was very careful in the choice of them.

In this passage St. Paul conveys to his readers, unfortunately n an epitomized form, and only incidentally, something of what e thought was the nature of the human Jesus. He makes it quite lear that he differed in some way from what previously he had een; 'being in the form of God . . . he emptied himself, taking he form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man; and eing found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself.' Before we nquire what change had taken place, and in particular what it as a change from, it may be helpful if we discover the reason for he change. St. Paul does not raise that question here, but from is other writings it is evident what answer he would have given, for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the lesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and s an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.'[33] The reason or the change was to condemn sin in the flesh. Now St. Paul eems to have thought that this could only be done by some reverse rocess in the flesh[34] of Jesus corresponding to that which had aken place in the flesh of Adam, the one spreading righteousness, he other sin.[35] Therefore, if Jesus as the second Adam, the new an, was to condemn sin in the flesh, he must have possessed a lesh and therefore a nature through which this could be effected. But, being in the form of God, unless God's purpose was to be rustrated a second time by a second Fall, it was obvious that he ould not have taken the flesh of sin, for that was the product of in. That was the dilemma, how could one who was in the form of God take the flesh of sin without first sinning? St. Paul got out of it by suggesting that Jesus did the next best thing, namely, he ook the 'form' which, as nearly as possible, identified him with the flesh of sin without involving him in actual sin. This change was not a change in nature, but a change in status. Hence St. Paul's carefully chosen words, 'the form (*μορφή*) of a servant,' 'being made in the likeness (*ἐν ὁμοιώματι*) of men,' 'being found

[33] *Rom.* viii, 3 f.
[34] *Eph,* ii, 15; *Col.* i, 21 f.
[35] *Rom.* v, 19.

in fashion (σχήματι) as a man,[36] 'in the likeness (ἐν ὁμοιώματι) of the flesh of sin.'[37] Though the change was one of status, and not of nature, it was nevertheless a real change, for the new status, the form of a servant, subjected Jesus, sinless as he was, to all the consequences of sin. 'Him who knew no sin be made to be sin on our behalf.'[38] The change was an act of self-abnegation, 'he emptied himself,' a humiliation, involving death, the supreme penalty of sin, 'he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross.' Jesus, when he took the form of a servant, took the road to Calvary. He had reached the level of fallen humanity, his change from the form of God corresponding to Adam's change when he too lost the image and the likeness of God.'[39]

Whether or not we are right in thinking that the first three chapters of *Genesis* are the key to St. Paul's mind in his conception of the form to which Jesus changed, I think there is little doubt that they lie behind his conception of the form from which he changed.[40] St. Paul says, 'who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God (οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ).' The significant word in interpreting this passage is, ἁρπαγμὸν; its exact meaning is of less importance than the general idea which lies behind it. What does St. Paul imply by equality with God not to be prized or snatched at? Surely, that Jesus might not have humbled himself, he might not have been obedient unto death. He might have preferred the form of God, he might have preferred the tree of life to the tree of death, he might have snatched at equality with God. Adam and Eve had believed the serpent when they snatched at the wrong tree, thinking that thereby they would be as God;[41] but Jesus was obedient unto death in strong contrast with their disobedience. If this is the right interpretation of the idea behind ἁρπαγμὸν, then the form of God which St. Paul thought that Jesus renounced was not pre-existence in God, or co-equality with him, but that state of human perfection modelled on God in which man was first created. That was Jesus' nature, and it never changed. Jesus before his 'fall' from the Godlike-status to the servant-status, was like Adam before the Fall; Jesus 'fell' to redeem humanity, Adam fell to degrade it.

Now this may appear to be a fanciful interpretation of this passage, but is it? St. Paul knew his Old Testament, his mind

[36] *Phil.* ii, 7 f.
[37] *Rom.* viii, 3.
[38] *II Cor.* v, 21.
[39] *Gen.* i, 26.
[40] See Rawlinson's *Bampton Lectures*, p. 134 f.
[41] *Gen.* iii, 5.

ad, as we have seen throughout, been working on the early chap-ers of *Genesis*, the beginning of the Roll of the Law, and he elieved the scriptures literally. What else could he have thought? f the first man was made in the image of God, in like manner ust the second man have been made; he could not have been ade lower, equally he could not have been made higher. This oes not mean that St. Paul thought that Jesus was just a perfect an whom God had used to carry out his redemptive purpose, and hom he had made Messiah because of his perfection. No, St. aul was no adoptionist. The birth of Jesus at that time was a eliberate act of God, with a deliberate purpose, that of redeeming allen humanity, and at the same time the promise to Abraham. esus was the seed, the child of promise. But though a deliberate ct, the birth of Jesus was by the ordinary processes of procreation. here is no suggestion of pre-existence or of a mysterious origin; t. Paul makes the plain statement, 'being in the form of God'; at was Jesus' nature and his birthright which he never lost, hough 'he took the form of a servant.' Though born in the flesh, e was not born 'after the flesh,' that was the significant difference. Like Adam before the Fall, he was true to type,[42] the divine type; s such he was the second Adam, the new man.

In the first four verses of this passage, St. Paul had given to he Philippians the example of Messiah's humility; in strong con-rast to the hushed reverence with which he outlined the story, a tory they well knew, he then breaks out into a song of triumph. God had reversed the humiliation of Messiah by the resurrection. 'Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the ame which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every nee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and hings under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that esus Messiah is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'[43] These erses would seem to corroborate the interpretation we have given o the previous ones. Surely, if St. Paul had thought of the human esus as pre-existent in God, co-equal with him from all eternity, e would not have expressed his exaltation quite like that. There re two ideas latent behind these verses which would seem to rule ut that possibility. First, they suggest something more than the estoration of a *status quo*; they suggest that something new had een conferred on Jesus, namely, the immortality which he had spurned when he took the form of a servant, and the Lordship of he new creation. Secondly, they suggest that the one on whom hese things were conferred was a different person from the one

[42] *Rom.* v, 14. [43] *Phil.* ii, 9-11; cp. *Eph.* iii, 14.

conferring them. There is nothing in these verses which would suggest that St. Paul is expressing a different doctrine of the resurrection of Messiah from that which he had so frequently expressed elsewhere. In fact, the whole of this Philippian passage is no different doctrinally from the other passages in his epistles in which he tells the story of God's redemptive purpose in Messiah.[44] His teaching here does not go beyond even the bare tradition which he had received, 'how that Messiah died for our sins according to the scriptures . . . and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures.'[45] What St. Paul had done was to set this simple tradition to the music of the scriptures; he embellished it with the creation story, he also beautified it, and gave it a cosmic significance. His main interest here as elsewhere is soteriology, not christology, though the way in which he presents his soteriology is indicative of what he thought of the nature of the human Jesus.

Further corroboration that this is the correct interpretation of these verses is I think given in a later passage in the same epistle. There, St. Paul expresses, in typical form, what were the hopes and expectations of those who, like himself, were part of the new creation. "For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Messiah: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself.'[46] Here we have a picture of a simple Messianic community awaiting the return of their Lord. There are, however, some interesting parallels in both thought and language with the previous passage, which suggest that Messiah was about to reverse in them the process of humiliation which he had himself undergone. We may note the following, 'who shall fashion anew (ὃς μετασχηματίσει), with which compare 'being found in fashion (σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς)'; 'the body of our humiliation (τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως),' with which compare, 'he humbled himself (ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτόν)'; 'conformed to the body of his glory (σύμμορφον τῷ σώματι),' with which compare, 'being in the form of God (ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ)'; and the absolute authority of Messiah at the end of each passage. There are also a number of parallels drawn between St. Paul's own experience in Messiah and those of Messiah himself in the previous chapter.[47]

After this somewhat lengthy discussion of *Philippians*, we must now turn to two further passages, *Colossians* i, 12 f, and *Ephesians* i, 4 f, in which it has been assumed by most scholars that St. Paul

[44] cp. *Rom.* viii.
[45] *I Cor.* xv, 3 f.
[46] *Phil.* iii, 20 f.
[47] iii, 7, 12-15.

ent far beyond Jewish Messianic theology, and expressed in unquivocal terms his belief in a pre-existent Messiah whose very ature was that of God himself. In the first of these passages we may note the familar soterological theme which we ave found in *Philippians* and elsewhere, 'meet to be partakers the inheritance of the saints in light; who delivered us t of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingom of the Son of his love; in whom we have our redemption, e forgiveness of our sins'; 'you, being in time past alienated nd enemies in your minds in your evil works, yet now hath he econciled in the body of his flesh through death.'[48] There re, however, some new phrases, 'who is the image of the invisible od, the firstborn of all creation, for in him were all things created . . all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he before all things, and in him all things consist. And he is the head f the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from e dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the ulness dwell.' Now these new phrases are very striking, but do ey really commit St. Paul to a doctrine of a pre-existent Messiah, -equal with God, and working in conjunction with him from efore the beginning of time? If we suppose that St. Paul is eferring to the old creation, and to Messiah's part in it, then, of ourse, they do. But it is perfectly clear, not only from these hrases, but from the whole trend of his theology, both explicit nd implicit, that he is not referring to the old creation at all. He ad no longer any use whatsoever for it, 'ye have put off the old an with his doings, and have put on the new man, which is being enewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created im';[49] 'the fashion of this world passeth away';[50] 'therefore if ny man is in Messiah there is a new creation: the old things re passed away, behold, they are become new';[51] 'put on the new an, which after God hath been created in righteousness and ruth.'[52] St. Paul thought that the old creation had gone horribly rong.[53] The whole purpose of his epistles, indeed, his life's purose was to show that it had been put right by God through Messiah, and that it was about to be superseded by the new creation which Messiah had brought in, and which would soon reach its glorious climax.[54] It is that creation, the new creation, which St. Paul is referring to. Surely phrases such as 'firstborn of all

[48] cp. *Col.* ii, 12 f.
[49] *Col.* iii, 9 f; cp. ii, 20, iii, 1.
[50] *I Cor.* vii, 31.
[51] *II Cor.* v, 17.
[52] *Eph.* iv, 24 and *I Cor.* v, 7.
[53] *Rom.* i, 5; viii, 23; *Eph.* ii, 12.
[54] *Rom.* xiii, 11, 12; *Eph.* v, 16; *Col.* iv, 5.

creation,' 'firstborn from the dead,' 'head of the body, the church,' make that quite clear. Here in this epistle he goes no further doctrinally that he does in *Corinthians* xv, 20 f, the typical Messianic eschatological passage, and he goes no further than contemporary Jewish Messianic teaching, for the changing of the fashion of the world was one of its favourite themes.[55] We may note also that St. Paul is careful, even in his ecstacy of devotion to Messiah, not to ascribe to him what would have jeopardized the absoluteness of God, and made him unnecessary; the new creation was not made by Messiah, but in him, through him, and unto him. He is before all things, only in the sense that the firstborn precedes the rest of God's family.

We are left with two further phrases of particular interest, 'who is the image of the invisible God,' and 'that in him should all fulness dwell'; with these we may take the two parallel passages, 'that ye may know the mystery of God, even Messiah, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden,'[56] and 'in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in him ye are made full.'[57] The simple interpretation of these phrases is that St. Paul was thinking of Messiah as the divine Logos, but I am sure that it would be the wrong interpretation, for it does not seem to me that there is sufficient evidence in any of his epistles to show that he was familar with, or attracted by, the Logos-theology. What exactly St. Paul means by 'the fulness of God,' I confess, I do not know, neither do I think that anyone else knows. There seems to me no reason for believing that here, more than anywhere else in his epistles, he was going beyond the bounds either of the strictest Jewish monotheism or of Jewish Messianic teaching. A religious experience which enabled St. Paul to say 'your life is hid with Messiah in God,'[58] without implying, as he clearly does not, that man is a part of the divine Pleroma, was equally capable of enabling him to say the reverse without implying the identity of Messiah with God. As he says, he is speaking of the 'mystery of God,'[59] and he is using the language of mysticism, not that of Neo-Platonic theology. Also, as I have already pointed out in this paper, whatever St. Paul says of the risen Messiah, he says also of those who are his; 'to know the love of Messiah which passeth all knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God' (*ἵνα πληρωθῆτε εἰς πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ Θεοῦ*);[60] till we all attain unto

[55] *Is.* xi, 6; lxv, 17; *Tobit,* xiii, 16 f.; *Eth. Enoch,* 1-36, 83-0; *Jubilees* xxiii, 26 f.

[56] *Col.* ii, 3; cp. *I Cor.* i, 24.

[57] *Col.* iii, 9.

[58] *Col.* iii, 3; cp. verse 4.

[59] *Col.* ii, 2

[60] *Eph.* iii, 9; cp. *Col.* ii, 10.

ne unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Messiah' (τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ);[61] 'the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all' (τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσι πληρουμένου).[62] Whatever St. Paul means by Pleroma, we must credit him with using such an important word, if it was important, consistently, and we must be careful not to read too much into it. Personally, I am convinced that the idea that in Messiah 'dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,' is nothing more than a part of his conception of the climax of things; fulness relates to time, and to the nature of the new creation, not to the nature of God, 'unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Messiah, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth; in him, I say, in whom also we were made an heritage.'[63] Messiah was the fulness of God in the sense that what had been God's purpose from the beginning was fulfilled in him. Surely σωματικῶς should warn us against any other interpretation.

When we turn from *Colossians* to *Ephesians*, we find the same soteriological motif which is common to all his epistles. St. Paul's mind, however, takes a wider sweep here, and in introducing one or two new trends of thought[64] he makes what appears to be a reference to the pre-existence not only of Messiah, but of himself also. 'He chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love: having predordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Messiah unto himself, . . . to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.'[65] Here St. Paul is clearly referring to times before the old creation, and is not thinking of pre-existence at all, excepting in the mind of God; there is no suggestion that Messiah co-operated with God in bringing the old creation into being, for it was 'God who created all things.'[66] This passage, however, is of particular interest, as it throws some light on St. Paul's doctrine of election, as well as upon his cosmology. What he means, surely, is that Messiah, the Beloved, represents the type of man God had in mind when he first conceived the idea of making man at all. The first man, however, had fallen, and with him all who followed. It was only now, in Messiah,[67] and in those that accepted him, that that original idea in the mind of God had been realized. God's creation had at last come true to the

[61] *Eph.* iv, 13, cp. verses 15 & 16.
[62] *Eph.* i, 23.
[63] *Eph.* i, 10; cp. *Col.* iii, 10f.
[64] see also *Eph.* i, 14; iv, 19.
[65] *Eph.* i, 4.
[66] *Eph.* iii, 9.
[67] *Eph.* iii, 9, 11; cp. i, 9.

archetype he had chosen; 'unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Messiah . . . in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will.'[68] As is well known, this idea of things existing in the mind of God was common to the Judaism of St. Paul's time, and there seems little reason for doubt that it is along these lines that he is thinking here, as also when he speaks of 'that rock was Messiah.'[69]

We may now attempt to sum up the findings of our examination of St. Paul's conception of the person of Jesus. The simple answer to the question, what did he think of Jesus, is that he thought of him as Messiah, no more, and no less. Once the conviction that Jesus had been raised from the dead had been born, he built around him the whole fabric of Old Testament and Apocalyptic messianism. As I have said, he embellishes it, he may have strained its meaning by dragging passages from their context, that was all part of the accepted method of Biblical exegesis of the time, but he does not go beyond its logical implications. He was among the greatest of Old Testament theologians, and it was he who brought the New Testament into being as literature. Christianity was no new religion to him, it was no offshoot of Judaism, it was Judaism. Jesus was not the incarnation of God, but of God's purpose for man. Apart from the scriptures, Jesus would have meant nothing to St. Paul.

His conviction that Jesus was Messiah arose out of a personal experience; his conviction that the type of Jesus' Messiahship was 'according to the scriptures' arose out of a personal need. As we have seen, his main interest throughout his epistles is soteriology, a soteriology with a strong other-worldly bias. Christology did not interest him. The doctrine of the two natures, the human and the divine, would have meant nothing to him; that was a later development based in the principles of Greek dualism. The only dualism which St. Paul knew anything of was that which existed between fallen humanity, and humanity as God had intended it to be. Even that was not a fundamental dualism, but the result of an accident. That was the dualism which interested him. How could it be resolved? His answer was, only by the reversal of the Fall. That needed a new creative act by God. God had acted. Jesus was born, the new man created. He was true to type, the God-type[70]: his was the true human nature. There was no question

[68] *Eph.* i, 10f.
[69] *I Cor.* x, 4. See H. St. John Thackeray, *The Relation of St. Paul to Contemporary Judaism*, p. 204f.
[70] *II Cor.* iv, 4.

f incarnation, God taking our nature upon him; it was the reverse hich was required, that fallen human nature should again take n the nature of God. Only in *Philippians*, where he describes is process, does St. Paul tell us anything of what he thought of e nature of the Jesus who moved among men. That is the nearest e comes to christology, and what he says is meagre and elusive, ut it is indicative. Actually, he never mentions the word nature, ut had he done so, he would surely have affirmed that it was not the ature of Jesus which changed when he took on the form of a ser- ant, but the conditions under which it endured. Jesus accepted he consequences of sin with attendant death, that thereby, through he resurrection, new life might be infused into the old man by the ew; 'though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that e through his poverty might become rich.'[71] How exactly he con- idered that the life, death and resurrection of Jesus had infused uman nature with new life, it is impossible to say; personally, I lo not think that his sacrificial terminology was more than passing netaphor — he uses it of the believer as well — but I suspect that what he thought was that the Spirit had thereby been freed to work in man. Once again, God had breathed into man the breath f life; the Spirit had moved once more upon the face of the deep. allen human nature had not thereby automatically been changed, ut man had been given what he had lacked since Adam, the pos- ibility of the new nature. Those who accepted Messiah had been given an earnest, part-payment (ἀρραβών), through the Spirit.[72] Messiah, the new man, alone had been exalted by the resurrection o the full status of Sonship with God. The resurrection did not hange the nature of Jesus, only that of his body, but it gave to im the gift of immortality. That, and true Sonship with God, he would share with all men when the process of redemption which e had begun on earth had been completed by all men accepting im as Messiah. St. Paul's eyes were ever fixed on the future, e waited anxiously, almost impatiently for the Second Coming, he judgment, and then, for those who were in Messiah, eternal lessedness. Men would then have regained to the full their birth- ight. and the fulness of the divine life which was in Messiah. Then, and only then, would human nature have been redeemed, nan would have reached 'the knowledge of the Son of God, unto he fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness f Messiah.'[73] Man would then be 'the image and the glory of God.'[74] That was St. Paul's conception of God's scheme of edemption, it was all of a piece, it was wholly Jewish.

[71] *II Cor.* viii, 9.
[72] *Eph.* i, 14; *II Cor.* i, 22.
[73] *Eph.* iv, 13.
[74] *I Cor.* xi, 7.

We must not allow ourselves to forget that, as far as our evidence goes, St. Paul's epistles are the earliest of the Christian writings. His theology is accordingly primitive. It is more primitive than that of the first three gospels. With amazing genius he worked the first hopes and aspirations of the early community into a cosmic scheme. In doing this he gave them a dignity, a rationale, and a terminology which the less audacious and less inspired sources of the Synoptic Gospels lack. Though his theology is the most primitive to the New Testament, his expression of it is the most advanced. The simplest and the most concise summary of it is to be found in one of the early sources of *Acts*, beyond that, St. Paul did not go; 'repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that he may send the Messiah who hath been appointed to you, even Jesus; whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began.'[75] We must not read St. Paul in the light of the Fourth Gospel, but vice versa. The author of the Fourth Gospel was the second great religious genius of the early church, and he was greatly indebted to St. Paul; but he wrote neither to interpret, nor to supplement him, he wrote to supersede him. Their theologies were poles apart. He superseded him, because St. Paul's theology, his scheme of things, had become discredited. It had become discredited because it depended too much on the Parousia, the Second Coming which never came. For the Parousia the author of the Fourth Gospel substituted the much less hazardous doctrine of the Paraclete, for the Messiah he substituted the divine Logos, for Judaism Christianity. Despite St. Paul's universalism, his theology was so Messianic that it killed itself. That is surely shown by the oblivion into which it and his letters sank until rescued more than a century later by Irenaeus, who, ironical though it may seem, reinterpreted them in the light of the Fourth Gospel, and of the prevailing Logos-theology of his time.

[75] *Acts* iii, 19f.

THE JESUS OF ST. JOHN

By the Rev. C. J. Wright, B.D., Ph.D.

I.

THIS theme is transcendent, central and basic, both for the individual Christian and for the whole community of the disciples of Christ in the world.

My jumping-off board is a letter sent by Archbishop Frederick Temple to his son, William, on July 2nd, 1899. It was a father's reply to an undergraduate's speculations on the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

> 'I can neither say Yes or No to your speculations and to Coleridge's speculations on the *Formula Fidei de Sanctissima Trinitate*. At this point Coleridge and I have always parted company. I cannot understand him; and I have never been able to feel sure that he understood himself. Nevertheless, I am obliged to confess that from 17 to 25 I indulged largely in such speculations. But I felt all along like a swimmer who sees no shore before him after long swimming, and at last allows himself to be picked up by a ship that seems to be going his way. I do not want to check your imaginings. Go on as long as you feel that you get any good at all by doing so. But I rather fancy you will come to the same end I came to long before you. My passing ship was S. John.—Your loving Father.'

When I came upon this letter recently in the Life of Frederick Temple, I felt at once that its relevance to our present intellectual, moral and spiritual situation was unmistakable and inescapable. It is not just, or chiefly, that the father's prophecy was fulfilled in the voyaging—or swimming—of his eminent son. It is that here is a word of one who being dead yet speaks to the intellectually-eager, to the dogmatically-perplexed, to the spiritually-hungry, to the morally aspiring of our own fateful and urgent era. Nor need I remind you that it came from one who had passed through the tribulation of the *Essays and Reviews* period of bitter contention—having himself taken a prominent part in that work of ecclesiastical, if strictly insular, disturbance: the first concerted endeavour of the Church in this island to confront unwelcome but now imperative issues. Nor need I recall that it came from one who at the time was mainly responsible for the practical guidance of the Church of England.

Why is it that *St. John* speaks the healing word to our mental distresses, the dynamic word to our moral perplexities, the directing word to our spiritual aspirations? *Why* is it that this Gospel

has so spoken to all sorts and conditions of Christian people, and to many who have been doubtful, if not of their right to belong to the Christian *flock*, at least of their right to belong to the Christian *fold* (thereby showing how Christianly-Johannine they were in heart)? To an Origen, to a Pascal, to a Comenius, to a Schleiermacher, to a Wordsworth, to a Westcott?

It is because, I believe, there is in *St. John* an integration, or a harmony, of the mental, moral and spiritual claims and qualities of human existence here in this world of time and sense — an integration and a harmony which I find fully paralleled in no other book that I know. For this Gospel is not only — as Clement of Alexandria called it — the 'spiritual Gospel.' It is also the 'practical' Gospel, and the 'intellectual' Gospel, and the 'moral' Gospel. Its practicality is seen in its Christ-inspired insistence that the only abiding goodness, the only true betterment, comes from the regenerated heart. Its intellectuality is seen in its Christ-awakened recognition that truth in time must be grounded in truth in eternity. Its morality is seen in its Christ-derived acceptance of life as a conflict between good and bad—in its passionate love and pursuit of the good, and its complemental abhorrence and rejection of the bad. Its spirituality is seen in its Christ-begotten awareness of the Divine Source, Inspirer, and Consummator of cosmic and of human history: of Him whom Jesus has taught religious mankind to call 'Father': in obedience to Whom is found that fulfilment of life called, so fittingly and finally, 'eternal life.'

My own deep and controlling conviction about this 'integration,' this 'harmony,' is that it is the literary expression of the historical reality of the inmost life of Jesus Himself. That is, the unity — to me inescapable — of this Gospel is not an *original*, or *imaginatively-created*, unity. The Johannine Evangelist is expressing the essence of objective historical truth. He is the historian of the consciousness of Jesus.

In the mysterious over-ruling providence by which human spirits become the agents of the increasing purpose of God, the Johannine author was the channel through which the inmost meaning of the person, mission and message of the historic Jesus was transmitted to subsequent generations of the Church. Jesus Himself — as far as we know — wrote nothing, except, as a dramatic teacher, on the ground, and, as a creator of history, in lives. . . . In a day when so few books were written by so few for so few, how precarious must the transmission of the essential mind of Jesus have seemed to a judicial and scientific observer of the time—this Jesus who had not even troubled to join the company of the *writing*

prophets! That transmission was only possible through 'eye-witnesses and hearers of the logos,' to use St. Luke's language.

Among these 'eye-witnesses and hearers' (for though I do not here discuss authorship, I write on the basis of my own considered view and judgment) was that young Jerusalemite and intensely Hebrew disciple who — perhaps forty years on, probably more — wrote this Gospel: that passionate inheritor of Mosaically-inspired monotheism, and of prophetically-inspired humanism: that heir of Abraham, of Moses, of Elijah, of Amos, of Hosea, of Micah, of Isaiah, of Jeremiah, of the prophet of the Exile: that youth who, nurtured in the inner milieu of priestly Judaism, witnessed with flaming anger, during the closing months of the ministry, the subtle, blind, unresting hatred of those who had set themselves to silence this upstart from Galilee, this blasphemous innovator, this unsettler of the sacerdotal and theological regime, this underminer of the national and ecclesiastical edifice, this arrogant Jesus who refused to bow before their authority, who claimed to speak of, and for, the One Divine Father, and to be the incarnate vehicle of His eternally-changeless Nature and of His ceaselessly-operative purpose for His whole human family here on earth.

For such a man was, I believe, the Johannine Evangelist. Not the Christian Hellenised pagan in whom so many of my theological teachers tried to make me believe, by spoken and by written word — among the latter dear devoted Loisy. Not the son of Greece, but the son of Judaea. Not the Alexandrian Philonist metaphysician, but the Jerusalemite Christian prophet. The man 'called' to recall the Church, then immersed in the unavoidable stream of the intellectual life of the Hellenistic world, to the moral and spiritual springs of its essential faith — lest in the speculative gulf its experiential message should be lost. The man 'called' to reawaken in a Church, alive to the practical tasks of an enlarging administration, the vision of Him to whom the Sabbath, and all other things instituted, were always subservient to the life of man — lest in the vast institutional haven future voyagers of the Spirit should be forbidden the adventurous explorations of faith. The man 'called' to show to the divided, and divisive, groups in the Church of his day — the Petrinists, Paulinists, Apollinists: the Christian Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees: the incipient Marcionites who denied the God of Israel, the incipient Gnostics who denied the Son of Man, the incipient humanitarians who denied the Incarnate Son: the (shall I say) first century Catholics, Evangelicals, Modernists—to recall them all to the living fount whence they had flowed, to the spiritual rock whence they had been hewn:

lest in mutual antagonisms they forget their one enemy and lose sight of their one Lord and Leader. . . . And—dare I say?—the man 'called' to renew that call in each successive generation, and in our own to renew it imperatively. For the healing of the divisions of the Church, as also the faith for a perplexed and disordered world moving so uncertainly to a new day, is in the mission and message of Jesus as it is quintessentially declared in *St. John*. In this Gospel, which taught the mediaeval mystic to say to the spiritually-deaf of his day, 'The day of the Father is past; the day of the Son is passing; the day of the Spirit is yet to be.' For this evangelist was the voice of the Spirit of Jesus crying, 'Behold I make all things new.'

II.

Jesus was a son of Israel. And Christianity was a daughter of Jerusalem. And St. John's Gospel, written by a Hebrew of the Hebrews, was the culminating record and interpretation of the New Testament—whether it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem or later in the first century, and whether it was written first in Hebrew or in Greek (and I do not think the last critical word has been written on either of these two issues, nor do I regard either as of *vital* importance). It *is* of vital importance that we should be *en rapport* with the mind of this Jewish-Christian evangelist, who was himself, as a believe, in fullest *rapport* with the mind of His Hebraic Leader and Lord. The Johannine teacher is the Church's Hebraic prophet, and the Hebraic interpreter of Him who came not to destroy the Law and Prophets but to fulfil them —'the pioneer and perfection of faith' as the writer of *Hebrews* has it. It is *his* writings, therefore, that with unerring fitness close the whole indivisible Canon of the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

I have used the word *rapport*. By that I mean something deeper than intellectual understanding: for we can *understand* everything, and *know* nothing. In every great and deep mind there is a unity in which are comprehended, or rather fused, the intellectual, moral and spiritual qualities of the Father's being, which, by His gift of grace, are His candle in man. That is why it is only by a unifying intuition that we can really *know* any true and full mind. Deep calls only to deep. Unity speaks only to unity. Integration is heaven-born—often in terrible travail. Except a man be born anew he cannot see this indivisible Kingdom of God.

That is why 'psychological exegesis,' as I have ventured, at the risk of being misunderstood, to call it, is essential if we are

o elucidate the Fourth Gospel — or, indeed, any other great work r art, of philosophy, of religion, these heaven-born creations of uman minds. By that phrase I simply mean that it is only by etting inside an author's mind — by standing where he stood, by eeling as he felt, by seeing as he saw — that we are able to know hat he really tried to say in this poor inadequate medium of anguage. In my recent re-reading of the Life of Frederick Temple, my jumping-plank, I found to my joyous surprise that nearly ninety years ago he said what now seems to me the same hing. In a letter dated Jan. 20, 1857, he wrote to a Mr. Scott:

> 'Our theology has been cast in the scholastic mode (? mould) *i.e.* all based on Logic. We are in need of, and are gradually being forced into, a theology based on psychology. The transition will not be without pain; but nothing can prevent it.'

He did not elucidate his insight. But what, I take it, he meant was hat Christian truth or doctrine has been generally taken to be a eries of sacrosanct conclusions reached by logical deduction from ndisputable verbal or conceptual premises; and that this whole nethod of approach and of presentation must give place to one based on the fullest and deepest knowledge of the human mind, f the conditions this mind imposes on its knowledge of objective eality, on the laws of its own progress in understanding and of he way by which it becomes an enlargening channel of God's pur-oses in history. At least, *that* is what I myself mean when I speak f 'psychological' exegesis and interpretation. And what I am ere saying is that no book more than *St. John* requires for its nderstanding this undogmatic, this non-rationalistic, this psycho-ogical, this intuitive, this (if you will) 'mystical' approach and uality of mind. I am fortified in this fundamental conviction bout this way to the Jesus of history, and, specifically, to *St. John*, y the judgement of one of our most eminent, most judicial, most enetrating critical historians of the Gospels, Dr. Maurice Goguel f Paris.

> 'It is on psychology,' he has written, 'that, in the last analysis, must rely every attempt to understand the life of Jesus.'

Nor does this mean that we are bogged in the myopic and neurotic ubjectivities of so much 'psychological' writing.

I have said that the Jesus of *St. John* is not the 'original' reation of the evangelist. It is, of course, 'original' in the custom-ry sense of that adjective. The more vividly a person sees, the more deeply he feels, the more he thinks from first principles, the more original, but the less Original, will be his work. Some inter-pretations have made of this Gospel, its meaning and message, a 'mythical' creation of unbridled speculation. The evangelist is,

however, the interpreter *of the historical Jesus*, not of his own un-historical fancies. From what we call 'the Prologue' right down to the last words of the 20th chapter (probably the original ending) and to the final words of the 21st chapter, he is writing of what Jesus was and did in the presence of His disciples, of what he and others had *beheld* of 'the glory' of this life, so full of grace and truth.

I use an illustration I have used before on the nature of this 'non-originality' of *St. John*. You press a knob on your wireless set and your room is flooded with sound from, perhaps, the Albert Hall, London. The music you hear is *transmitted*. It is not—to refer to an invention of which I read some ten years or so ago—'synthetic music.' In this, musical 'records' have been produced closely resembling those associated with the normal film but without historically pre-existent sounds. The 'composer' draws them with ink and brush: they are then turned into sound by the use of an ordinary film-projecting apparatus. Thus, in 'synthetic music' there is *original* sound, not derived or transmitted sound. In *St. John* the harmonies heard are a transmitted expression of a historical reality existent in the historical Jesus. And—this was the faith of Jesus Himself, as it was the faith inspired in the evangelist by Jesus—this historical reality is a transmitted expression in time and place, by human body and human mind, of the for-ever invisible and intangible, but the for-ever revealing and operative Reality of God. The evangelist transcribes the inmost mind and claim, the basic mission and message, of Jesus Himself. He is the vehicle for its transmission to all subsequent generations. 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.'

That is, the Transcendent 'I am that I am,' the Eternal 'I will be that I will be,' the Unapproachable Light, the Unsearchable and Undefinable, the Infinite Spirit who cannot be likened by the images of man—images in wood or stone, in word or concept—He, the Everlasting Father, is Self-declared in a Man: and this Man's knowledge is so intimate and so preremptory, this Man's obedience to the Father is so victoriously complete, that He can be fittingly called '*The* Son,' unique in His revealing place in human history, solitary in His leadership of the hosts of all other sons, single in the Father's redeeming purposes for mankind, alone in the quality of His insight and fidelity: so that, when the evangelist remembered how the Psalmist had said of himself, 'The Lord said unto me, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee,' he thought, 'Yes, every true man is a son of God: but in

Jesus was the whole truth of man incarnate: so He is "only-begotten" Son and has been in "the bosom of the Father" from all eternity.'

I have tried in these poor words to say what the whole so-called 'Prologue' of *St. John* says so much better. For the 18th verse is the dramatic summing-up of the verses preceding, linking together the truth of the ever-revealing, ever-operating God with the truth of His unique Self-disclosure and Deed in this Man, Jesus. 'In the beginning was the Purpose, the Deed; and the Purpose, the Deed, was with God; and the Purpose, the Deed, was Divine. . . . And the Purpose, the Deed, became flesh and dwelt among us. . . . No man hath seen God at any time: but *The* Son — He who was of the Invisible Father's heart and mind — He hath declared Him.'

I am not setting *St. John* in opposition to the Synoptic Gospels. Is light unnecessary because we have food, warmth because we have water, insight because we have sight, truth because we have facts? To those who *will* not misunderstand I would claim for the Fourth Evangelist what Browning's musician claimed for his art:

> But here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that can,
> Existent behind all laws, that made them and, lo, they are!
> And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,
> That out of *three sounds* he frame, not a fourth sound, but *a star*.

His 'framing'—to use Browning's word—was that of a dramatic artist, of a mystical seer, of an ardent prophet, of a symbolic—yes, and of (stone of stumbling to many) an allegorical—historian. All these qualities of the evangelist's mind are written indelibly, if to many invisibly—on his Gospel of Jesus. His 'framing' was, shall I say, the resolving back of the rainbow's colours into their unprismatic and original white light in the 'original' alchemy of his own mind. It was, shall I say by another figure, the blending of three folk tunes, each issuing from the soul of one people, into the original music which they separately expressed in time and place.

Such 'framing' is not, and never has been, done by what we call 'intellect' alone — whether the conceptual intellect of the abstractive metaphysician, or the descriptive intellect of the concretive scientist, or the factual intellect of the judicial historian. The *Book of Job*, for example, which reminds us in some respects of the greater Drama of *St. John*, was not so written — nor by a committee. Plato's Dialogues were not written by some examination-Platonist, some short-cut pedagogue of Platonism, but by Plato. *Hamlet* was written, not by a historian, nor by a commentator, but by Shakespeare. And of the Fourth Gospel about the Jesus of history, what can be fitly said of *its* dynamic unity? Surely, the

words of Wordsworth in *The Prelude* may justly be put into the evangelist's mouth :

> I cannot say what portion is in truth
> The naked recollection of that time,
> And what may rather have been called to life
> By after-meditation.

So in this Gospel we find the essential Jesus. Not the deluded apocalyptic visionary. Not a demi-god. Not a dogmatic abstraction. Not a pietist sentimentalist. But One to whom God was fully and finally real, the Transcendent and Immanent Father, for Whose Kingdom He taught, lived, died, in knowledge of Whom and in obedience to Whom is found eternal life.

I know nothing in the Jesus of *St. John* which *contradicts* the Jesus of the Synoptics. There are chronological matters of dispute, of course, but not *essential* differences : for example, the time of the cleansing of the Temple, of the unfolding of the nature of the Messiahship, of the date of the crucifixion, and so on. There are sayings of Jesus in *S. John* not found in the Synoptic Gospels, but in harmony with the teaching given there. Into this intricate question I cannot here enter, but confine myself to two quotations from competent historians. The late Professor Burkitt as long ago as 1901 expressed his judgment that 'the Fourth Gospel enshrines many true words of the Lord which would otherwise have been lost to us.' And Rudolf Knopf, in his completing section of J. Weiss's *History of Primitive Chrisianity*, wrote :

> 'Since we find parabolic words of Jesus on the good and true shepherd, on the flock, on the lost and sought-for sheep, in existence in the Synoptics as well; since, furthermore, a saying such as that in iii, 3, "Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God," has a strongly synoptic ring, one may suppose that John often draws the brief themes of his discourses from the tradition and then twines his own meditations round and round these nuclear words in artistic fashion. To express it figuratively, grains of gold from Jesus's sayings are hammered out by the evangelist and employed as gold foil upon the shrine which he is making.'

Should anyone hastily and light-mindedly declare that all this leaves the modern Christian in a subjective bog, I say, No, it delivers him from a spurious haven of objectivity. For nothing is certain, or 'infallible,' because one man, or any body of men, say so. Many people, of course, *like* to think that things are made 'certain' by loud and repeated assertions—which is, I fear, part of the reason for totalitarian claims made by Dictators, States, Institutions, throughout human history, and is to-day taught as the main trick in advertising technique (a 'psychological' method at the further remove from 'psychological exegesis'). You have all heard, no doubt, of the old lady of Bath who, when told that a

ridge over which she was accustomed to walk was unsafe, decided hat in future, for security, she would be carried across in a chair.

This term 'subjectivist' is one of the ninepins erected by the droit, or by the unreflecting: and it affords must gratification to certain type of spectator when it is emphatically knocked down. But, I fear, the spectacle of our theological contests between 'subjectivists'—whether 'mystical,' 'prophetic,' or 'liberal'—and 'objectivists'—whether 'authoritarian,' 'scholastic,' 'neo-scholastic,' r 'conservative'—has for long become no longer an amusing disraction but a stone of stumbling to sincere thinkers. For they *now* that it takes a subject to assert an object; it requires an xperient to know the experienced; it demands a discoverer to erceive a Revelation; it necessitates a 'Son of Man' to declare e is a 'Son of God'; it involves the historical to have awareness f the eternal; it is indispensable that there is a Man if there is to e God-manifest-in-the-flesh. None of these disturbing 'relativist ubjectivities' are rendered non-existent by comforting 'objectivist ogmatisms.' God's Self-revelation is no less secure because it is involved in the requirements of human history and in the demands nd laws of the human mind, than if it is buttressed by what men, n their wonder and ignorance, call a *miraculum*. Nor is that Divine Self-revelation any more certain because its limiting conditions are verbally denied. All human 'certainty' is conditioned certainty—conditioned by the inescapable facts of consciousness nd environing reality. Let me quote, not a metaphysician, not a heologian, but one of the most eminent scientific thinkers and discoverers of our time—Max Planck—to make emphatic what very truthful man knows in his heart:

> 'We can twist and turn as we will but we can never get out of our own skins. And whatever tangent we may fly off at into the realm of the absolute we are always really moving around within our own orbit, which has been prescribed for us by the range of experience perceived in our consciousness.'

And if it is asserted, as it has been so frequently and so vehemently during this last tortured generation by determined theologians of that frenzied 'objectivity' which cloaks the sceptical mind and the unquiet heart: 'But Jesus is from the Divine, not the human, side of reality,' it must be avowed that it was only because He was on the human side that He could Himself speak of the Divine side. And it must further be acknowledged that it is only they who have *some* knowledge of the Divine side who could assent to what Jesus Himself said about His solidarity with the Father. Turn and twist as we will in our apologetic contortions to find some transcendent object not involved in the immanental, the

relativist, the subjective, we come back to the hard and finally-inescapable word of Jesus — appointed, by inspired fitness, to be read in the Gospel for Trinity Sunday — 'Except a man be born anew he cannot *see* the Kingdom of God'—another version of the Synoptic beatitude, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' Because there was this Kingdom to be seen, Jesus saw it, taught it, lived for it, died for it, and liberated His Living Spirit for it. And because His own vision, His own mission, His own message, His own Spirit, has in every age helped and inspired men, they too have seen and served that Kingdom.

> Dwelt there no power divine within us,
> How could God's divineness win us? (*Goethe*).

III.

Let me now apply, briefly, the Johannine truth about Jesus — show its relevance—to the present situation confronting the whole Church of God. And on three issues, which embrace the past, the present, and the future.

(1) There is first the vexed, and vexing, contentious, and divisive, issue of what is called 'Christological dogma'—the aspect of 'dogma' which in unphilosophic circles is most sensitive to the revelations within the thought of the new age of reformation and revival struggling desperately in the womb of the present. I must here use language familiar only to students of Christian doctrine. But since these old questions are always with us in new forms, and since the Church's intellectual life is a continuous stream, not a series of static water-tanks, I cannot, in fidelity to my understanding of Christ, avoid this procedure.

One of my students once asked me this important question: 'Do you think the Johannine evangelist was an Apollinarian?' Now, an 'Apollinarian' was a Christian thinker who, at the time of the Christological controversies in the fourth and fifth centuries, maintained that Jesus had not a human soul or spirit, but that in His case that soul or spirit was replaced by a hypostatic Divine 'Logos.' My answer to the question was (here abbreviated): 'No, he was not. But the view of the Gospel widely maintained is that he was.'

Why is it that this Gospel has been regarded—from the second century onwards, and by opponents as well as by protagonists for Christianity, and by heretics as well as by orthodox — as denying that Jesus was truly and fully human? (For to be without a human soul is not to be human; a body does not constitute a man, as a corpse does not constitute a dead man.) Why is it that in our own period all sorts and conditions of thinking moral and spiritual

eople have been attracted to this Gospel in spite of what they egard (mistakenly, I am convinced) as its 'theological superstiion'?, I take, for example, the late Dr. Bernard Bosanquet as ypical of the latter. He wrote of *St. John*:

> 'In one sense it brings insight into the spirit of Christ to its highest perfection; in another sense it begins the degeneration of spiritual religion into theological superstitition.'

I believe the answer is here. A Hebraic Christian, the writing rophet of the person, message and mission of Jesus, was transnogrified, from the end of the first or the beginning of the second, entury onwards, into an amalgam of Hellenistic metaphysician nd Christian seer. The historical reason for this transformation vas the whole situation confronting the growing Church. A Chrisian Gospel, written by a Christian Hebraic prophet, instinct with he directness, the activism, the moralism, the spiritual trancendentlism of Jesus Himself, was interpreted chiefly in Alexandria—by Clement, Origen and, later, by Athanasius and Arius (for while hese latter two were violently opposed they were yet joint-heirs of he same intellectual milieu, so that their speculative differences were really less significant than their basic agreements). It is *how* people think that really matters, *how* they feel, *how* they act: and his 'how' belongs to the structure of their whole racial or anestral heritage.

Thus, that unique *way* of thinking, of feeling, of acting, which had appeared in prophetic Israel, and which had brought forth its inest and final fruit in Jesus of Nazareth, and which had received ts unique literary expression in *St. John*, was interpreted as but nother, and a directing, speculation of the 'metaphysical' Hellenstic mind. The 'Logos Prologue' was separated from the rest of he Gospel—final speculation from scientific history—instead of being, as it *was*, its dramatic, focussing and comprehending meaning. It became a 'metaphysical' launching-site for the Gospel, nnd had no relevance to its moral and spiritual teaching. And the Church was thus itself launched on the turbulent and foggy deep of its Trinitarian and Christological controversies, where no one knew for more than a moment whether other ships were friend or foe.

We have all inherited that history. It is both glory and darkness, answer and question, truth and falsity. Nor can we distinguish these—wheat from chaff—save by a deep, intuitive, spiritual understanding of the whole movement and meaning of historical Christian origins. Those of us who have had to teach the meaning of Christian doctrine in theological colleges and universities have had to use Athanasius as an examination-piece, and

have found, alas, that that remarkable production of a speculative youth, *De Incarnatione Verbi Dei*, served but to dull the eager mind and to kill the aspiring spirit of budding divines.

I am not trying, please, to say that the dogmatic engrossment of the third, fourth and fifth centuries was a *mistake*. Who dare say what *is* a mistake until the whole history is unrolled and the whole Divine Plan consummated? It is for each generation to do the duty lying to its hand, in the historical situation in which it is placed. The Church, placed as it was in the Mediterranean world, and unaware of the rich heritages of Persia, India, and the Far East, could do no other than try to out-think its world by expressing its message in that world's speech and concept. This it did. . . . No, we do not talk of 'mistakes.' But we can, I think, talk of 'impoverishment'—or of 'the provisional.' Christianity was impoverished when Councils, which 'can err and have erred,' implied and taught that truths of eternity can be contained in, or exhausted by, definitions and systems. In seeking to be wise beyond the wisdom of Scripture they were doing what each generation seeks—for the most part vainly—to do. But by their specific anathemas for those who wanted to continue to think, as at Chalcedon, they were blind to the meaning of Christian truth and to the urgent tasks of the future. Had the Church but acknowledged frankly, humbly, and truthfully that her words were provisional, elicited from her by demands which cannot, and must not, be determinative of the entirety of truth, the moral and spiritual emphasis of Him who fulfilled the Law and the Prophets would not have been displaced.

I do not forget the occasional insights of an Athanasius and of an Augustine and of an Aquinas, which made 'as of straw' their systematic treatises, even in their own eyes. For example, the famous 'ne taceretur' passage of Augustine in his *De Trinitate* ('three persons, not that it might be spoken, but lest it be left unspoken').

These insights were the mark of the ever-living, ever-operative Spirit of Uncomprehended and Incomprehensible Deity as He had become incarnate in the Jesus of history. These were the signs in the Church of the time that the Eternal Light had never been mastered, overcome, even amid the tortured and tortuous controversies of the dogmatic era. Nor will they ever be subdued into impotence as long as *St. John* remains to throw its consummating light on the central figure of the whole Biblical Revelation—on Him who was 'the effulgence of God's glory and the express image of His substance,' 'the pioneer and perfection of faith.' For here, in a Man, is alive in time and place the whole Meaning, Movement and Purpose of human history. The Transcendent and

naccessible One, whose operative Mind is revealed in the splendour of the heavens and in the wonder of the earth and of the sea, whose Spirit is manifest in the quest of man for truth, in the adoration of man before beauty, in the devotion of man to righteousness, in the aspiration of man towards eternity, did, in the fulness of the times, embody His Nature and His Will in the Son of Man. Yet He came unto His own, and His own received Him not: but as many as received Him to them gave He power to become true sons of God: for they were such as had been made one in the fellowship of His grace and truth, sharers in the Divine Nature, unto Christ's ampler day.

(2) There is, second, this now seriously and spuriously divisive question of 'Humanism' and 'Theism,' arising as a speculative irritant to sunder the forces of humanity and righteousness as they ought to be moving unitedly, unrestingly, and irresistibly to a day of more equal justice for the whole human family of God in the world.

Is it—as, alas, the Report *Towards the Conversion of England* declares and suggests—is it that 'Humanism' is the main enemy of the Church? Surely, no one who has drunk deep of the spirit of the prophets of Israel could so declare or suggest. Did not Amos, the first of the writing prophets, go forth to his Divine work because man's inhumanity to man had bitten into the very soul of his soul? If righteousness is enthroned in the eternal purposes of God can *any* partaker in that passion for justice, brotherhood and compassion, be *His* enemy? It is only because we have displaced the realities of moral and spiritual truth with the bloodless categories of fugitive and inadequate speculation that we can make so grievous a mistake, and so alienating a confusion: or, perchance, because we are so wedded to the things of Mammon.

For, as Jesus, both in the Synoptics and *St. John*, so finally told us: *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.* In every period of human history, not 'Humanism' but 'Mammonism' has been the one foe of the Eternal Kingdom. For 'Mammonism' is the worship and service of the deceptive things of self, and time, and place: and has shown itself as much in the trust of final and infallible dogmas as in the pursuit of money and of power. For ravens of sacrosanct definition and speculative system are as much abodes of spiritual decay as dens of iniquity are graves of righteousness. Both the haven of final dogma and the den of greed and selfishness are places where a spurious 'security' is desired and found. In the one case, security from the tides of the Spirit which moves unrestingly on the face of the deep, guiding the disciples of Jesus, in fulfilment of the Johannine promise, 'into all the truth.' In the other case, security from that disturbing and inescap-

able vision, and summons, of brotherhood and love; so that man seeks rest everywhere save in the Being and Nature of God, the all-Holy, the all-Compassionate, the eternal Father; regarding all other men as legitimate prey for plunder and exploitation — 'wolves' in the Johannine language of Jesus — or 'hireling shepherds.'

No thinker who has drunk deep from the prophetic well of living water flowing from eternity into history, and made available in the soul of Jesus, can hand over this noble term 'Humanism' to the materialists and secularists. He who is awake to the true in man is awake to the true in God. Our Lord hung all the Law and the Prophets on the two inseparable Commandments — Love to God and Love to Man. He taught us — and this message runs through all the Johannine writings — that if we are blind to one truth we are blind to the other. If 'Humanism' is degraded 'Theism' will share its fate. As the Johannine writer expressed it in his First Epistle, if we love not our brother whom we see, how can we love God whom we do not see? This truth, which flamed from the soul of Jesus, and found its least inadequate expression in *St. John*, is now, I believe, burning in the soul of an awakening age. Bagehot said justly, with reference to the qualities of Shelley: 'A large experience proves that a being who is blind to this world will be blind to the other; that a coarse expectation of what is not seen will follow from a coarse expectation of what is seen.' Is not that but a modern man's way of saying what Jesus, and St. John was always saying? 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, *because* we love the brethren.'

There is a theological blindness which, evading the facts of history, escapes into a kind of spider's web of 'transcendental' ideas. They bind, and make impotent. They strangle, and make sterile. Thoughtful and moral men to-day see this, and are thus dismissing these transcendental ideas as irrelevant. That is part of the present tragedy of institutional religion throughout the world: a tragedy for which all escapist and spurious 'transcendentalists' have great responsibility. The facts of human experience must be confronted, and not become the sport of the gods of security, expediency and profit. I find myself in full agreement with Professor Whitehead when he said:

> 'I hazard the prophecy that that religion will conquer which can render clear to popular understanding some eternal greatness incarnate in the passage of temporal fact.'

Jesus taught, and supremely in *St. John*, that much 'belief' is materialist and secularist self-deception. Men call themselves 'sons of Abraham' when their father is The Liar. They want 'certainty,' not that fulness of life which it was the mission of Jesus to

onvey. They approve theoretical assent, not that practical pursuit hich in every age is the mark of the faithful. 'He that willeth to o, he shall know,' said Jesus: a pregnant Johannine saying hich casts a vivid light on the Lukan parable of The Good amaritan with its piercing ending, 'Go, and *do* thou likewise.' Man is known by what he does. God too is known by what He *oes*. That is why *St. John* begins as it does, 'In the beginning as the Logos,' the *Operative* Mind and Purpose of God. 'Believng in' the name of Jesus is sharing the mind of Jesus. He who believes in' the name of Jesus is His servant. Men are His isciples if they *do* the things He did, think as He thought, feel s He felt. All this is both Johannine and Synoptic. 'Not everyne that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom f Heaven; but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in Heaven.' 'Blessed are they that hear the word of God and *keep* .' What we *serve*, that we really believe in. All other 'belief' is flight from self, from truth, from God.

Mammonism de-humanizes man. As also does much theoretical heism. Mammonism is the true 'original sin': though some eologians prefer to regard a pretentious speculation, neither ohannine nor Synoptic, about the 'origin' of sin as 'original sin' —pretentious, but wearing the garments of humility. The basic rouble, I find, in so much 'anti-humanistic theology' is that its God' is but a hypothesis to account for a difficulty—the difficulty f 'explaining' this very evil world. How easily we all forget that ne evil of the world has its seat in our hearts, and part of this vil heart of man is just the lust for speculative mathematical ertainty about the things of eternity that have to be *lived* in order b be known. Much theology is materialism in disguise. Its 'God' s the God of Deism, not the Living God of prophet, seer and aint: and certainly not the 'God and Father of our Lord Jesus hrist.' Pascal spoke in the spirit of the Jesus of St. John when e said:

> 'I cannot pardon Descartes. He would fain have omitted God from his philosophic system; but he could not avoid letting Him give a flick to set the universe in motion; that done, he has no further use for God.'

nd was it not Descartes who, famously, said, 'I *think*, therefore am'? A prophet would have said, not 'I think,' but 'I act.' As prophet declared of the 'Great I AM,' 'In the beginning was ne DEED.'

'My Father *worketh* hitherto and I work,' said Jesus. 'My neat is to *do* the will of Him that sent me, and to accomplish his ork.' So the opening sentence of the Gospel is the key to the hole. The evangelist was but reviving and revising the truth of ne old Creation narrative, 'In the beginning God created the

heavens and the earth. . . . And God *said*, Let there be light, an there was light.' The function of Light is to be a lamp to man' feet *to-day*, a guide to the pathway *that stretches ahead*. Jesus i *St. John* said, 'I am the Light of *the world*.'

(3) This Johannine reference fittingly brings me, thirdly an briefly, to the 'Universalism' of Jesus in *St. John*. This pervade the whole Gospel. It indwelt the inmost consciousness of Jesu throughout His ministry, knowing as He did that limitations o body and of time made it impossible that He should go elsewher than to 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'

For Truth is universal: and Love is universal: and Beaut is universal. Universal, not in the sense that these are universall known, cherished, perceived. But universal in the sense that the appeal to all, and in the final satisfactions they bring. He wh knew Himself to be 'the Way, the Truth, the Life' could no think of His essential mission in any limited or particularist term He who knew the One Divine Father could not think of *the worl* save as a family; nor of *the brethren* save as the whole redeeme company of mankind, past, present and to come. He who ha perfect Fellowship in the Life Eternal could not regard men separate, and separating, *folds*—of race, creed, system, institutio —as final. Nor could He acquiesce in any of our modern isolatio ist ideologies, or in the permanence of our sundering seas. 'Ther shall be no more sea,' wrote the seer in Patmos. He who *accepte* the cup of uttermost suffering knew that by being lifted up on th Cross 'all men' would be drawn—late or soon—to their Foun their Inspiration, their Goal.

> Thine is the mystic light great India craves,
> Thine is the Persian's sin-destroying beam,
> Thine is the Buddhist's rest from tossing waves,
> Thine is the empire of vast China's dream:
> Gather us in.

The Fourth Gospel is the most inspired drama ever written o the unending fight for this Universal and Eternal Kingdom. It of the age-long conflict between the sons of darkness and the So of Light with His disciples. The psychological seat of all 'darl ness' is in 'particularity.' This is, in man's refusal to see th God's light has never been confined to one people, to one religio to one place, to one book. This is the inmost meaning of St. John narrative of the meeting of the woman of Samaria and Jesus at th well of Jacob. The whole tragic drama of our times of world wa famine, disease, confusion, catastrophe is the climax of that div sive situation in men's hearts, minds and wills which is set for imperishably in the fourth chapter of the Fourth Gospel—a 'sta indeed, from the three preceding chapters.

For every division in man's outward life has its seat in his mind. What he thinks, that he makes: what he is, that he does. If he thinks of God as an Almighty Potentate whose 'favours' can be curried for sordid hopes and unworthy fears, the springs of his life are poisoned and the outflowing stream sows death upon the earth. If he thinks of some 'Mount Gerizim'—or some 'Mount Zion,' or some 'Rome,' or some 'Constantinople,' or some 'Canterbury,' or some 'Geneva,' or some 'Wittenberg,' or some 'Aldersgate Street,' or some 'Philadelphia,' or some 'Moscow'—as a place of exclusive revelation, he is an idolator indeed, denying the Nature of God and His purpose for His whole creation: and he becomes the father of ideological strife, of national and international conflict: begetting sons of Belial, Discord, Confusion, Death. Or, if he thinks of some 'Race'—Anglo-Saxon, Slavonic, Nordic, Aryan, Hindu, Mongolian, or what not—as the 'peculiar' seat and human source of truth, justice and love, he is the enemy of Him who has never left Himself without a witness and has caused the rain to fall on the just and on the unjust. There is but One Source of Eternal Truth and Value—He whom Jesus named to the Samaritan woman 'Father.' When men know that God is Father of all, they will not fight furiously about 'places' and 'races'; nor will they exploit the needs of others to material gain.

Or, if he thinks there is but one book—even the best—in which inspired men have written their words on paper, he will walk in blinkers. That, I believe, is what Jesus meant when, on their bringing to him a woman taken in adultery, they having cited their Book, He first wrote unrecorded words on the ground, and only then spoke to the Divine Law written in their hearts—'He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone.' For words of the written Law are as words written in the dust: the wind passeth over them and they are gone. But the Word of God written in the heart endures for ever—the reason why the words of Jesus do not, and cannot, pass away as long as man remains true to himself and to God. But the Crisis of self-revelation can be escaped in a haven of static Law—as by those in the Johannine story who slunk out, one by one, to concoct new tricks.

When, or if—for who dare speak confidently about man's future in this world of time and sense? Who, in the blinding blast of the Atomic Bomb, dare prophesy what man will do to this terrestrial ball, under the inscrutable overruling of the Eternal Father? —when, or if in the ages to come, mankind, united and complete, is able to erect some Temple symbolical of the One Religion, taught by Jesus and incarnate in him, over its portico may well be inscribed His words in *John* iv, 24: 'God is Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.'

JESUS AND CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS

By Canon R. D. Richardson

IN speaking of institutions it will be natural, although some may not think it spiritual, to begin with Aristotle. He tells us that men form associations 'for the sake of life itself'; also, because they are 'impelled' to one another 'by a common interest'; also, because the attainment of 'the good life,' which is, he says, 'the chief end' of man, requires certain institutions for its satisfaction. Aristotle, of course, was speaking of such institutions as marriage, the household, property and, ultimately, the *polis*, which was however, as Sir Ernest Barker points out, not only a state but also a church, inasmuch as it was concerned with moral growth and its stimulus to promote the fullest life.

> 'All associations aim at some good,' says Aristotle, 'and . . . the particular association which is the most sovereign of all, and includes all the rest, will pursue this aim most, and will thus be directed to the most sovereign of all goods.'

But in that 'most sovereign and inclusive association' which he calls the *polis*, hardly any autonomy was as yet possessed by politics, philosophy, art, or ethics; all were nurtured and promoted in the one institution. The history of subsequent civilization is the history of a gradual distinction drawn between state and society, and of the development of the latter in autonomous yet interrelated institutions. Among these, the religious associations may claim to represent the highest of all forms, since religion, as we must here assume, affirms Reality, *the* Reality, *i.e.* the self-existent God, and presupposes that He alone is our Sovereign good. All associations are natural, continues Aristotle, and that which fulfills the spiritual nature of man is the most natural of all.[1] That is why,

[1] *cf.* Sir Ernest Barker's ed. of the *Politics*, pp. 5, 7 ff.

by an inevitable law, natural but also spiritual, the Church came into existence, and why, from the second generation of Christians onwards, it formed institutions by which the various needs and manifold aspirations of its members might be expressed and satisfied.

I take it for granted that Jesus Himself did not found an organized Church; mature and balanced scholars of all Christian denominations admit this; indeed, they delight in tracing the continuity of the Christian Church from the lowly beginnings, and through the obscure backwaters, which lead to the mainstream of religious history. It will be sufficient to quote Cardinal Newman,

remembering more than casually that his edition of Aristotle's *Politics* is still a foundation of English translations of that work. He says that

> 'What man is amid the brute creation, such is the Church among the schools of the world . . . She began in Chaldea, and then sojourned among the Canaanites, and went down into Egypt, and thence passed into Arabia, till she rested in her own land. Next she encountered the merchants of Tyre, and the wisdom of the East country, and the luxury of Sheba. Then she was carried away to Babylon, and wandered to the schools of Greece. And wherever she went, in trouble or in triumph, still she was a living spirit, the mind and voice of the Most High; "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions"; claiming to herself what they said rightly, correcting their errors, supplying their defects, completing their beginnings, explaining their surmises, and thus gradually, by means of them, enlarging the range and refining the sense of her own teaching.'[2]

In this purple passage, remarkable alike for its thought and for its beauty, the Church is regarded as a visible institution indwelt by a consistent, regulative, living spirit. It has grown from that small beginning in Chaldea where Abraham, first, answered the call of faith, a faith described in the *Epistle to the Hebrews* as venturing all in search for 'the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.' Into such a church was Jesus born, and He made use of its institutional aids and forms: not only would He enter the Jewish Covenant with the prescribed rites, receive the education of a synagogue-school, and grow up in sight of scenes whose every corner and hill was filled with memories and lessons of a great religious tradition, but He appears to have taught in synagogues, and to have had strong feeling for the Temple. The sight of its beauty and the thought of its destruction aroused emotions which made Him weep on His last journey to Jerusalem, and Mark tells us that on entering the city He went directly to the Temple: 'and when he had looked round upon all things, it being now eventide, he went out to Bethany.' What depth of religious feeling, what reverent awe, what feeling for the history of His people lies in that touch: 'and when he had looked round upon all things.' Note too how Jesus quoted the Old Testament; and in what a spirit of living sacrifice He regarded His life. Then there is His feeling for other institutions, and for things: the parables have for their background the family, the household, the social life of His day; and His teaching of God's rule uses the metaphor of a Kingdom. We are told too that He was baptized, although baptism was no part of the main religious system to which he belonged.

[2] *Essays Critical and Historical*, pp. 231 f.

But now we meet with a paradox, for Jesus' conception of the Kingdom of God is one that puts an end to institutions; it is of a universal, spiritual kingdom, in which the will of God alone is law and is obeyed by the sons of the Kingdom gladly and spontaneously. The only authority which Jesus claimed was the authority of love and truth, of a spirit filled with the presence of God; the only hierarchy He valued was that which puts first the servant of all; the only social bond which He created was that which sprang from attachment to His gospel and His person; the only sacraments He used were prayer and such uncovenanted sacraments as Nature and the deepest human ties create. Let me quote the authoritative words of Bishop Lightfoot:

> 'The kingdom of Christ, not being a kingdom of this world, is not limited by the restrictions which fetter other societies, political or religious. It is in the fullest sense free, comprehensive, universal. It displays this character, not only in the acceptance of all comers who seek admission, irrespective of race or caste or sex, but also in the instructions and treatment of those who are already its members. It has no sacred days or seasons, no special sanctuaries, because every time and every place alike are holy. Above all it has no sacerdotal system. It interposes no sacrificial tribe or class between God and man, by whose intervention alone God is reconciled and man forgiven. Each individual member holds personal communion with the Divine Head. To Him immediately he is responsible, and from Him directly he obtains pardon and draws strength.'[3]

What, then, was Jesus' ultimate intention? It is obvious that His teaching represents an ideal, and one that is incapable of fulfilment save in a spiritual world; it represents a perfect concord of immortal souls with one another and with God-in-Christ, the acknowledged, worshipped Source of all their good; it posits that the discipline of all earthly societies has been fulfilled. For a brief space after Jesus' death, men thought indeed that this consummation was at hand; and under the shadow of the proximate end of the world, life tended to be lived without reference to the state or family, certainly without reference to philosophy or art; though never quite, apparently, without reference to a church, for the earliest Christians frequented synagogue and temple. But the event proved that earthly life and social duties had not ceased; and, ever since, these have grown in complexity and difficulty. Hence, although the Gospel of the Kingdom purified and spiritualized men, yet it did little or nothing towards helping to develop their earthly life, and those Christians who, by the world's continuance, have been driven to aim at the organization of society have been compelled, as Von Hügel says,

[3] Essay on *The Christian Ministry* in the Commentary on *Philippians*, p. 181.

'to borrow largely from the old Testament legal and Jewish arrangements . . . , from Stoic principles and Graeco-Roman orderings.'[4]

These were, however, transformed in the borrowing, and Christian institutions have a marked character of their own. They include declarations of faith, forms of public worship, and systems of ecclesiastical organization — without which no society, however spiritual in nature, can express its life and continuity. Each, in its own order, corresponds to some inward apprehension of the Kingdom of God, and has continued to express this apprehension throughout the changes in its various manifestations. The institution that comprehends them all is the visible Church—into various forms of which the earliest disciples of Jesus insensibly and necessarily organized themselves as they gathered or acted in His Name.

The earliest use of the word *ecclesia* to indicate a Christian assembly is found in the genuine portions of the *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, where Paul expounds it (using the same image as Aristotle and other classical writers had used when speaking of a community) under the very natural simile of a human body whose every limb and organ has a particular function. Animated by Christ's spirit, all the members constitute His body; suffering and honour are shared by all alike. In this pure democracy, the inward aspect of the Kingdom of God which is grasped and stressed is that of co-ordination; as worshippers in a community, all are equal. Significantly enough, the term *ecclesia* originated in the age of pure Athenian democracy; and it was no doubt used by Paul as the natural Greek translation of the Hebrew *keneseth*, an equally correct Greek word for which is 'synagogue.' Any ten Jews could form a synagogue, and Paul thus speaks simply of the synagogue of those who, at first, were called Nazarenes;[5] there were many such, founded by Paul and by others, and because of the bonds they had in common, which also distinguished them from other synagogues, they constituted in a sense one single *ecclesia*.

The next great step in the development of the Church is revealed in the *Epistle to the Ephesians*, which is probably not Pauline. Here the conception of the church has moved from that of a society in which all the members are necessary to each other to one in which the Church is necessary to the members; the whole is prior in nature to the parts. Can the Body of Christ be divided? asks the writer (iv, 3). The spirit of Christ is reincarnated in the Church, His visible Body, and by incorporation into it men are brought into mystical communion with the divine life. It is no

[4] *Essays and Addresses*, II, p. 83.

[5] *cf.* Kirsopp Lake and F. J. Foakes-Jackson, *The Beginnings of Christianity*, IV, pp. 54 f.

longer a body animated by Christ's spirit; but Christ is the Head, or the Corner-stone, and others take their places under Him. Again, the 'wall of partition' between Jew and Gentile has been broken down, and both have their citizenship in the sacred polity. The word *ecclesia* is now brought into line with its meaning in the Septuagint and translates the Hebrew *qahal*, *i.e.* the Elect People of God over against the world; and the inner aspect of the Kingdom thereby grasped, and stressed, is that of unity. The differences between the churches, reflected for example in St. Paul's Epistles and in the *Acts*, are being ironed out; similarly the Fourth Gospel prays "that they all may be one,' and Ignatius, who is in this line of development, is the first to speak of the 'Catholic Church.'[6]

The third stage in the development of the Church is represented in the New Testament by the *Gospel according to St. Matthew*. Here, the identification of the Church with the Kingdom of Heaven is unmistakable, *e.g.* the keys of the Kingdom are represented as effective both in heaven and on earth.[7] This prepared the way for the idea of a vast religious society, ecclesiastically organized, the historic Catholic Church; and the Roman Empire, which united its various races by one administration of law and of public services, furnished the example of how this idea might practically be realized. The cult of the emperor formed the coping-stone of the Roman system; and to the unity of worship already existing in the Christian Church was added the influence of this imperial outlook, importing a new and alien element into it. In the words of F. E. Scott,

> 'The worship demanded for the imperial "Lord" was one of the prime factors in quickening the sense of Christian unity.'[8]

Organization and system, form and ritual, were needed if the Church was to hold together, for the 'first love' of Christians was 'growing cold.' Yet, even so, another inner aspect of the Kingdom of God now began to come into its own, that of universality. With Church and Empire finally co-existent, Christianity attained something like a world-wide mission, and every civilized man within its orbit was born to the knowledge that God is the Father of all. This fundamental development was in no wise effaced by the break-up of the Western ecclesiastical empire into National Churches at the Reformation. Rather, we now have to note that in the Church as a super-state the ideals of the Kingdom of Heaven had become subordinated to the organization originally brought into existence to

[6] *ad Smyrn.*, 9.

[7] *cf. The Beginnings of Christianity*, I, p. 330.

[8] F. E. Scott, *The Gospel and Its Tributaries*, p. 225, a most suggestive work.

promote them; and the Reformation marked an attempt to recover those ideals, and to promote them in the only large way possible, *i.e.* in National Churches. In the attempt to form a universal church on imperialistic lines, uniformity assumes too large a place. True unity is achieved more satisfactorily through federations of national, and also of lesser, churches. No one has described the one Visible Church more truly or more aptly than Richard Hooker:[9]

> 'As the main body of the sea being one, yet within divers precints hath divers names; so the Catholic Church is in like sort divided into a number of distinct societies, every one of which is termed a Church within itself. In this sense the Church is always a visible society of men; not an assembly, but a society . . . Men are *assembled* for performance of public actions; which actions being ended, the assembly dissolveth itself . . . whereas the Church which was assembled doth no less continue afterwards than before . . . As therefore they that are of the mystical body of Christ have those inward graces and virtues whereby they differ from all others which are not of the same body; again, whosoever appertain to the visible body of the Church, they have also the notes of external profession, whereby the world knoweth what they are . . . And of such properties common unto all societies Christian, it may not be denied that one of the very chiefest is Ecclesiastical Polity . . . which is a form of ordering the public spiritual affairs of the Church of God . . . But we must note that he which affirmeth speech to be necessary among all men throughout the world doth not thereby import that all men must necessarily speak one kind of language. Even so the necessity of polity and regiment in all Churches may be held without any one certain form to be necessary in them all.'

The growth of the Church was accompanied by growth in conception of the Ministry necessary to it as an institution. In the first Christian democracy, the work and worship of the Church was conducted by all, in accordance with their spiritual gifts. Says St. Paul:

> 'To one is given, through the Spirit, the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, . . . to another faith, . . . to another gifts of healing . . ., to another workings of powers, to another prophecy, to another discernings of spirits, to another divers kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.'

And in the Church, *each one* is to use his appropriate gift, in an orderly and edifying fashion (*I Cor.* xii, 8 ff). In the light of this, I can make nothing of the hierarchy of 'first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, etc., mentioned in this same *First Epistle to the Corinthians*. My belief, which I may not stop to develop here, is that the Pauline epistles, like the Gospels, now contain various strands of different date; certainly this hierarchy reappears, substantially the same, in the much later *Epistle to the Ephesians* (iv, 11), where it has significance as revealing the growth of ideas of the ministry which matches the new conception of the one mystical, yet visible, Church.

[9] *Ecclesiastical Polity*, I.

This ministry, even if hierarchical, proceeding from the Lord Christ downward, was still a ministry of the Spirit; and its ministers were itinerant, passing from church to church, and by this very act fostering the idea of an essential Church which is one. But with the success of the Christian mission and the growth of large Christian communities, the peripatetic ministry began to give way, in the next age, to more local ministries; and since the local churches had from the first been Christian synagogues, those who had the prophetic oversight of them soon began to be equated with the elders, or presbyters, who were their traditional overseers. There was a gradual and inevitable merging of offices; accordingly, no account at all is given in the New Testament of the institution of elders in the Christian Church.

The earliest purely administrative function in the Church, was that of distributors at the Christian eleemosynary meals which were apparently customary until the last quarter of the first century; and the writer of *Acts* thinks it important to give this institution prominence. He does not use the word 'deacon,' but the Seven are said to be chosen διακονεῖν τραπέζαις, to serve tables (vi. 2). In adding, however, that the apostles laid their hands on them, the writer is surely reading back into the scene something that had become customary only in his day, *i.e.* at the end of the century. Even to speak of the Twelve as '*the* apostles' is surely anachronistic, for the word 'apostle' was first, and for long, used to denote all Christian missionaries; besides, the writer of *Acts* goes on to describe the Seven as preaching only, not as serving tables at all. This can be explained if by his time deacons have become part of an organized ministry; but it is noteworthy that his historic sense and Christian spirit still fixes on their first institution as something startling and new after Christ's own heart: did not Jesus Himself say, 'I am amongst you as he that serveth'? Nor did the Church ever quite surrender this conception even when it transformed the church into a society of clergy and laity governed by bishops and ultimately by a Pope. By definition, this last is still 'the servant of the servants of God'; and for centuries the prescribed number of deacons in any church remained seven; the cardinals were originally seven—the seven deacons of Rome. Thus also in the English Ordinal deacons are still appointed 'to serve,' and 'to search for the sick, poor and impotent,' after the fashion of the first deacon, Stephen. The ministry of service, the only ministry recognized in the Kingdom of Heaven, is set at the heart of all ecclesiastical ministries, never to be superseded even in the higher offices of the organized churches.

The essential ministries of the organized church are, then,

these two, overseers and servers, the former being those on whom gradually devolved the prophetic ministries of the earliest pneumatic church — although when deacons became a ministerial class theirs was held to be a prophetic ministry too.

> 'Elect therefore for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord,' says the writer of the *Didache*, 'for they also minister unto you the ministry of prophets and teachers.'

I need not stop to argue here that the word 'bishop' in this quotation, as in the New Testament, means the same as presbyter, and that the episcopate as a separate order of the ministry came into existence in pursuance of the third line of church development, as part of the monarchical and sacerdotal government of the church conceived as the Kingdom of Heaven. As a constitutional episcopate, with a bishop as a father in God and *primus inter pares* among presbyters, the office recovers in the Church of England a legitimate value.

The Church and the ministry, then, were means to an end; with various attendant evils, inevitable in human institutions, they nevertheless ensured that important elements in the teaching of Jesus had due effect in organized society. Whereas the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven is the divine announcement of the aim and end of human life, historic Christianity is the established visible means to that end. We may, if we like, even call the Church and the ministry essential means to that end. They are not essential, however, in the sense of having been instituted by Jesus Himself.

What now of the Sacraments? These come under the same description. The only ordinance that would seem to have been instituted by Jesus is a prayer, the Lord's Prayer as we call it, and even this is prefaced in *Matthew* by the words '*after this manner* pray ye.' It implies a family, but does it imply of necessity an organized Church? Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper however are "social sacraments, parts of a social system,' as Bishop Gore calls them, but they do not, as he maintains,

> 'involve the truth that Christ has instituted a "Kingdom of means" a visible channel for His covenanted gifts of grace.'[10]

It is true no doubt, as we have already mentioned, that Jesus was Himself baptized; and by that act Baptism is consecrated to our use; but once entered on His own ministry He did not baptize others, as even the Fourth Gospel, at the end of the century, emphasizes (iv,2). The command at the end of St. Matthew's Gospel

[10] *The Church and the Ministry*, pp. 353 ff; an answer to Bishop Lightfoot quoted above.

appears late in the tradition, and is contradicted likewise by St. Paul, who thanked God that he had baptized with his own hands only three or four persons (*I Cor.* i, 14-17). But the apostle carried over into Christianity the mystical drama of rebirth, or dying and rising with Christ. Whether he carried it over from Judaism, or, as seems to me more likely, from the mystery religions, in which it plays an essential part, we do not know; but it is clear that his language is quite figurative, describing only Baptism with the spirit; it was the Church of the *Epistle to the Ephesians* that translated it into an actual sacrament and made it a badge of Christian unity: 'one Lord, one faith, one Baptism.' Yet how efficacious it became to adult souls who had undergone the long training of the Catechumenate! Hear St. Cyprian:

> 'While I was still lying in darkness and gloomy night, wavering hither and thither, tossed in the foam of this boastful age, and uncertain of my wandering step, I used to regard it as difficult, in respect of my character at that time, that a man should be capable of being born again . . ., that a man quickened to new life in the laver of saving water should be able to put off what he had previously been; and although retaining his bodily structure, should himself be changed in heart and soul . . . But after that, by the help of the water of new birth, the stain of former years had been washed away, and a light from above, serene and pure, had been infused into my reconciled heart; after that, by the agency of the Spirit, breathed from heaven, a second birth had restored me to a new man, then, in a wondrous manner, doubtful things . . . began to assure themselves to me, hidden things to be revealed, dark things to be enlightened; what before had seemed difficult began to suggest means of accomplishment and what before had been thought impossible to be capable of being achieved.'[11]

Can anyone doubt that through this sacrament Cyprian entered into the Kingdom of Heaven? In the century after Cyprian we find Libanius, the teacher of Basil and Chrysostom, saying:

> 'Through the bath Christ entered this world, and has opened to us the way of salvation.'

A little later Chrysostom himself tells us that every hamlet in North Syria had its baths, provided by the estate owner, which were used for baptism in the absence of a river or the sea. Baptism was still the most important sacrament. And since, remarks A. V. G. Allen, a line can only begin once, so it was considered that baptism might not be repeated. Heretical baptism, lay baptism, baptism symbolised by only sprinkling water or even, if necessary, by pouring sand, were all held to be valid; and at last infant baptism was introduced, which incidentally extinguished the practice of infanticide.

[11] Ep. 1, *ad Donatum.*

Of Baptism as finally conceived in the Catholic Church, Auguste Sabatier says:

> 'As political states are recruited by birth, so the Church is recruited by Baptism. A baptised person may be unbelieving or rebellious; he remains none the less the subject of the Church, and the Church always has the right to claim him.'

Behind this imperial and supernatural theory, lay the deeper Christian one that the Church included the whole world and not just the 'saved,' and that every child and man possessed spiritual potentialities that could be made actual by teaching, training and reclamation in the spirit of Christianity. In this connection, I must note the extension of the baptismal formula from baptism 'into the name of Jesus' to baptism 'into the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,' a formula which, despite the challenge of tritheism to which its wording lies open, stands for education in the fulness of the Christian faith. It stands (in Canon Major's words) for

> 'the doctrine of a Divine Being transcendent, immanent, incarnate, the God of nature, of history, and of the rational, moral and spiritual consciousness of man.'

Critics of 'Basic Christianity' should note these words. None the less, Baptism into the name of Jesus should be again permitted, and this, together with other reforms, would help to restore reality to the Church, which needs above all else to-day to be recalled to a sense of discipleship.

In that crucial *Epistle to the Ephesians*, in which Baptism is first represented as a sacramental ordinance of the Church, the Lord's Supper is not yet mentioned, although ample opportunity presents itself when the writer develops the theme of how Christ 'nourisheth and cherisheth' the Church; nor can its existence be inferred plainly from *Acts*:

> 'Day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they did take their food with gladness and singleness of heart' (ii, 46).

That Christians attached special significance to 'the breaking of bread' is plain; but the controversy as to whether this is, or is not, a reference to the Eucharist hinges entirely on whether the latter was instituted, and commanded to be continued, by Jesus Himself, as recorded in *I Cor.* xi, 23-26. This passage, as I have argued at length elsewhere,[12] would certainly appear to be one of the later insertions into the Pauline writings; it expands the Markan account of the Last Supper, under the influence of the teaching of the

[12] In Appendix I to Miss D. H. G. Reeve's translation of Lietzmann's great work, *Messe und Herrenmahl*, now in the press.

Epistle to the Hebrews on the New Covenant; its words of institution reveal liturgical influence, and have moreover been extended under a growing devotion to the person of Jesus; its purpose also is to regulate the unseemly behaviour which had crept in at a type of Christian Supper whose original form we can still discern behind this later addition. In its original form the Supper was evidently of the same kind as 'the breaking of bread' in *Acts*: an act of brotherly love, unselfishness and charity around a common board, continuing the practice of Jesus with His disciples. But the increasingly sacrificial meaning attached in Christian minds to His death gave a new significance to the last of these suppers of the Lord, in that the sharing of the bread and the drinking of the wine on that occasion appeared to Mark as ratifying a Covenant made by Jesus, after the Jewish fashion, and to abolish the Passover. (A cup of wine is still drunk by the principal parties when a Jewish child is admitted to the Covenant made by Moses.) Mark's account of the Last Supper, then, is that of the institution of a *Covenant*, not a sacrament. But in the generation after Mark, the broken bread and poured-out wine, by a natural and obvious symbolism, came to stand sacramentally for the body and blood of the victim; and so by easy stages we can trace the growth of the sacrificial cultus of the Mass and transformation of the Eucharist which eventually, more than anything else, obscured the Gospel of the Kingdom. In the first centuries the prevailing understanding of the sacrament was still spiritual: eating and drinking at the Table of God, the disciples of Jesus rejoiced in the fellowship of worship which is grounded in Eternity; in the worshipful use of the fruits of the earth, matter itself, and the labours of men's hands, were sanctified; Christians fed on the spirit of Christ with their hearts and minds. How beautiful are the words of administration of the bread in the Liturgy of Hippolytus:

And when, at length, a sacrificial and theological meaning had completely overlaid the original rite, this was brought back, at the Reformation, to its true meaning—to that act of Jesus in the Upper Room when His sharing of a simple meal with his disciples took on the tragic signficance of a *Last* Supper. That is why the meal first came to be thought of as repeated in His remembrance; and through the ages true Christians, in their heart of hearts, have penetrated to the essence of the matter and wished simply, at the Eucharist, Mass, or Holy Communion, to commemorate, religiously, what He did on the night in which He was betrayed. The meaning of it is something into which we can continue all our lives to grow. Dr. Gregory Dix, a writer who utterly fails to understand

he liberal tradition, and whose history of the liturgy is distorted y a whole series of misconceptions and unexamined assumptions, an yet write truly and beautifully of the matter when he writes eligiously.

> 'For century after century,' he says, 'spreading slowly to every continent and country and among every race on earth, this action has been done, in every conceivable human circumstance, for every conceivable human need from infancy and before it to extreme old age and after it, from the pinnacles of earthly greatness to the refuge of fugitives in the caves and dens of the earth. Men have found no better thing than this to do for kings at their crowning and for criminals going to the scaffold; for armies in triumph or a bride and bridegroom in a little country church, . . . for a schoolboy sitting an examination or for Columbus setting out to discover America . . . for a village headman much tempted to return to fetish because the yams had failed; . . . while the lions roared in the nearby amphitheatre; on the beach at Dunkirk . . . At Constantinople they 'do this' yet, with the identical words and gestures that they used while the silver trumpets of the Basileus still called across the Bosphorus, in what seems to us now the strange fairyland of the Byzantine empire. In this twentieth century Charles de Foucauld in his hermitage in the Sahara 'did this' with the same rite as Cuthbert twelve centuries before in his hermitage on Lindisfarne in the Northern seas.'

nd this very morning I 'did this,' with a rite[13] substantially the ame as Cranmer used when he brought the act nearer, after many enturies, to its meaning in the Upper Room and started the movement which we here are pledged to continue, *i.e.* to set again the eart of the Gospel at the heart of the Church.

Yet in taking the blessed bread and wine in Christ's remembrance, none in this pageant of souls has been obeying a command hich He Himself gave in so many words. The words 'Do this remembrance of me' express a command that is given to the eart when it feels the sway of the life that was lived and spent r all in Galilee and Jerusalem.

The Church with its ordinances of Baptism, Eucharist and inistry are, then, closely connected with the labours, teaching hd the very person of Jesus; they are institutions developed in is spirit to match the needs of spiritual life in the world.

On the many lesser Christian institutions I may not dwell, for one maintains that these were founded by Jesus. But it is orth noting how the inner spirit of the Church, sooner or later, ansformed all the institutions of the society in which Christians ved. The displacement of the Jewish Sabbath by the Lord's Day remarkable; even more so, although it took longer to accomish, the transformation of the Roman by the Christian Calendar, which time is consecrated by festivals expressive of Christian

[13] The 'Harborne Rite.'

beliefs. The hospital system, started by the Romans for their military needs, became the chain of great institutions dedicated to the alleviation of suffering, chiefly at first among the poor. The ascetic view of life that belongs naturally to the East found early expression among Christian hermits and coenobites; but from the sixth century, under the influence of St. Benedict, it blossomed into the still prayerful but also active and beneficent institution of monasticism, which throughout the Middle Ages fostered humane as well as divine studies. It was a Christian emperor, Charlemagne, who attached a school to each cathedral, while the modern idea of education developed out of a combination of the mediaeval Christian learning with the rediscovered thought of Greece and Rome; schools for the multitude are in origin Christian institutions, and in England, at the Reformation, no less than two hundred and seventy endowed new grammar schools were added to the total of only thirty-two which existed before.

> 'It is generally stipulated in the instrument of foundation that the master shall be a learned man, apt and godly, qualified to instruct in good letters and good manners, and that he shall receive as his pupils children of all ranks.' [14]

The record of Christian institutions has, of course, dark places; but on the whole, and in proportion as the institutions remained true to their first inspiration, they brought men not only nearer God but nearer the fulfilment and satisfaction of their own true nature. 'The Church: a necessary evil' was one of Alfred Fawkes' biting and holding phrases; but it is only evil in such sense as our own bodies may be called evil, the sense that their good functions have corresponding misuses and diseases; and like the human body, so the Body of Christ, the Church Visible, with every one of its institutions, belongs to a different order from its soul, the Kingdom of God; the one is on earth, the other is in heaven. But just as Jesus Himself translated the ideal into practice in the majesty and beauty of His perfect life, so the Church came into existence as the embodiment, in some measure, of His ideal in the society of His followers. Existing institutions were changed at the touch of His Spirit; they found a new meaning which re-created them. Nothing could be the same once Jesus had lived; nothing can ever be the same for those who know Him; they pursue the activities which are common and necessary to life upon this earth, but in a different way, as those who are in the world but not of the world; and this new orientation of life finds its climax in the fellowship of worship, when we give ourselves utterly to the Sovereign Source of all our good.

[14] *Chambers Encyclopaedia*, article *Education*.

JESUS AND THE CREEDS

By the Rev. A. W. Adams, M.A.

THE theme of this Conference is 'The Historic Jesus and His Gospel.' It might seem that the subject allotted to me —'Jesus and the Creeds'—introduces a somewhat alien note. Do ne two really belong together? Does the atmosphere of bitterness nd controversy in which the Creeds developed blend with the weeter and purer air in which Jesus lived and taught? Have our redal statements more than a very remote connection with the Man of Nazareth, who lives for us in the pages of the Gospels ather than in the definitions of Nicea or Chalcedon? Is it reasonble or necessary to add to the bewilderment of the men and omen of this generation by presenting for their acceptance ormal statements of belief which were fashioned long ago, and hich seem to have no bearing on the moral and ethical problems hat trouble and divide us to-day? Have science and history, the ew knowledge both of Jesus and the world in which He lived, nd of ourselves and the world in which *we* live, nothing to say to his, no new contribution to make, no changes to suggest? Do we, fact, need Creeds at all?

These and similar questions seem to be implied in the title Jesus and the Creeds.' And though it may be that they are raised only by a minority within and without the Church, yet that they ave been and are being raised, points to a tension which cannot e ignored. But it would be unwise to assume that questions can e asked only from one side, or that only one answer—a negative nswer—can be given. Are Creeds really necessary? we may ask. Much, no doubt, depends on what you mean by the word 'creed,' s content and its use. But if Christianity stands for something istinctive and unique in human history and experience, if you elieve, as from very early times Christians certainly believed, hat with the coming of Jesus a new era in the world's history had awned, that in and through Jesus, His life and His death, God as revealed as never before, and that, in consequence, God and an were 'reconciled' and brought together, then this demands a esh orientation of all our thought about the world and man and od. And if, in contrast to others who do not see these things as

you see them, you are led to take your stand on these beliefs, a creed in the sense of an affirmation of faith is a natural as well as a logical result. That in time creeds came to have other uses than the simple expression of positive belief, that from the first they expressed faith about Jesus which grew alongside the faith *of* Jesus, does not affect the issue—a creed of some kind was inevitable if the Church, as Bishop Creighton put it, was 'to be something.'

Indeed, the faith about Jesus began at Caesarea Philippi when Peter confessed 'Thou art the Christ.' Other papers at this Conference will have enlarged upon the contributions made by the different New Testament writers. But we might pause again to remind ourselves how the growing experience of new life and forgiveness through Jesus in the fellowship of his spirit impelled St. Paul and the authors of the Fourth Gospel to make the most amazing claims and affirmations about him whose life on earth was still within living memory. He was 'born of a woman, born under the Law,' was 'originally in the form of God,' 'the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation, . . . all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things cohere'; though 'in all things made like unto his bethren,' 'tempted like as we are,' learning 'obedience by the things which he suffered,' he is also the Son of God 'appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds . . . the effulgence of his glory and the very image of his person'; the Word who was in the beginning with God and was God, by whom all things were made, 'became flesh and dwelt among us.' It is interesting to see how already Christian thought about Jesus leads on to cosmology. God, they believed, had acted through him to redeem mankind; through him they were a 'new creation.' It was but a short step to affirm that Jesus of Nazareth is the embodiment of that divine creative energy and love which have always been active in the world. Indeed, cosmology could hardly be kept out. What they believed about Jesus led them to consider what sort of a world it is in which Jesus could 'happen.' An interpretation of Jesus and his significance for them implied an interpretation of the universe as a whole. But two things stand out clearly in contrast to a good deal of later speculation. In New Testament thought the human life of Jesus was central. They reasoned on from Jesus to God and the world—*i.e.* their theology was embedded in history; and all their thinking was closely related to Christian life and practice—the ethical and moral consequences of their faith were not subordinated to purely speculative considerations.

However, this extraordinay freedom and boldness of interpretation does not imply, and certainly does not necessitate, elaborate formal statements of belief. For one thing, the early Church was not a sect of philosophers, but a religious society, and many of its members were drawn from the uneducated and poorer classes. For another, experiment must in any case precede precise definition. At any rate, the first affirmation of faith in Jesus which arose in Jewish-Christian circles was of the very simplest kind—'I believe that Jesus is Messiah, the Christ.' That was the distinctive belief of the earliest Christians, and for its elaboration and interpretation, no less than for its defence, they naturally turned to the Scriptures—*i.e.* the Old Testament.

But the expansion of the Christian Church into the Gentile world quickly brought it into contact with other influences and traditions which were quite foreign to Hebrew ways of thought. To begin with, when a Jewish-Christian affirmed that Jesus was Messiah or Christ, he had in those three momentous words proclaimed that all the religious hopes of his people had been fulfilled in Jesus. But to the Gentile the title 'Christ' had no significance, and other ways had to be found in which the converted Gentile could express his conversion—faith. He might—or he might not—mean the same as his Jewish brother when he declared 'I believe that Jesus is the Lord,' or 'I believe that Jesus is the Son of God.' But at least he understood what he meant.

Once the Church became firmly established in the Gentile world, there was a natural impulse to interpret its distinctive beliefs in terms of the thought and knowledge of the time. Indeed, a Christian philosophy was necessary if Christianity was not to be left hanging in the air. We have seen how a more speculative type of thought, already to some extent under Greek influence, was taking shape in the minds of some of the New Testament writers, though it was no doubt incidental to their main purpose. The process had to go on. The Church was above all else a missionary body, and it found other religions and philosophies in possession of the field which it desired to make its own. It was forced to justify its faith not only at the bar of experience, but at the bar of reason also.

Thus the development and expansion of the Creeds, which took place in this atmosphere of intellectual ferment, could scarcely be avoided as time went on. In the first place, the Church was forced to re-define more precisely its beliefs as a result of controversies which threatened to split the Church from top to bottom. In the second place, its policy was to exclude heresy and

heretics, which is the short way of proscribing and dealing with opinions that seem to endanger or even destroy the Gospel. We meet here the second and negative element in creed-making. In origin Creeds had been simple affirmation of positive faith—'Jesus is Messiah, or Christ,' 'Jesus is the Lord,' 'I believe in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit.' Now clauses and articles were drawn explicitly to serve as a test of orthodoxy. But

> 'The Church as a whole had no disposition to discourage attempts to work out answers to the pressing problems that confronted it in relation to its main convictions about Jesus. . . . It was only when solutions of problems were offered which ignored some of the data, whether of early tradition or of present actual experience of Christians, that those solutions were ruled out, whether better ones could be found or not. No theory was to be accepted that formally made the Lord less divine than God, or formally impaired the reality of his manhood. Nor was any theory adjudged heretical till it had been examined in its relation to the conviction of Christians that in Jesus there had been effected the possibility for men of real unity with the supreme God. Christian faith insisted on seeing in the experience of Jesus in some sense the experience of God himself, and could tolerate no theory of his personality that made contact with him less than contact with God.' (J. F. Bethune-Baker, *The Faith of the Apostles' Creed*, p. 45.)

Having come thus far, the next step would logically seem to be the treatment, on historical lines, of the stages by which the Creeds reached their fully developed forms. 'Had we but words enough and time,' as the poet says, this would no doubt be the best method to follow. But as it is, a mere catalogue of the disputes and controversies, with the names of those who figured in them, would be of no interest to those who are familiar with the subject, and unenlightening to those who are not. The temptation to discuss heretics is strong. They are always more interesting than the orthodox. But the truth is that even those who have become a bye-word for unorthodoxy were seldom strikingly original. In any period heretics have much more in common with their less adventurous contemporaries than appears on the surface, or could be gathered from their mutual recriminations. The real currents of thought run deeper than controversy, and what is stigmatized and condemned as heresy is generally an exaggerated one-sidedness rather than ideas completely new, the inability to hold together different aspects of the truth as it appears to men of this century or that.

We shall do better for our purpose if instead we take the credal statements about Jesus in the form in which they are used to-day, and ask ourselves: What are they trying to express, and

why did they say it in that way? We may then be able to draw our own conclusions.

First, then, we turn to the Creed most familiar to English Christians, the so-called Apostles' Creed, which as it stands in our Prayer Book is an enlarged form of the ancient baptismal creed of the Roman Church. If, knowing nothing of the traditional forms of Christian belief, we came to it expecting to find a document glowing with fervour and enthusiasm, we should be disappointed. Terse, clear-cut, definite, as regards the Person of Jesus it gives us little more than a bare summary of the main facts of his life as they are recorded in the New Testament.

> 'I believe in Jesus Christ his only son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead and buried, He descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.'

No doubt this *provenance* of the Creed explains much. The genius of the Western Church, as of the Roman Empire which preceded it, is of a practical, orderly, methodical, unspeculative kind, and those qualities are reflected in its Creed. But we should be mistaken if we supposed that the Apostles' Creed is merely factual rather than religious. Creeds are concerned to declare faith, and if that declaration includes plain facts, it was because these facts were of supreme religious importance. This Creed is no exception.

The primitive baptismal formula declared simply 'I believe that Jesus is the Son of God.' It thus bore witness not only to the faith of the believer in Jesus; it attests Jesus's own faith about himself. His consciousness of divine Sonship runs through the whole of the Gospel narrative, and it cannot be eliminated without destroying entirely the Gospels as historical documents. It is also part of the New Testament tradition that God is the Father, not only of Jesus, but of all men. We are all His children, unworthy children, disloyal and disobedient children maybe, but but nevertheless His sons.

The Creed as we repeat it Sunday by Sunday, however, affirms that Jesus is the only Son of God. To many Christians to-day, certainly to Christians in the past, this has meant that Jesus is Son in a sense that does not, and cannot, apply to us. He is the *divine* Son. We are but human—all too human, children by adoption, not of right. Was this the intention of those who framed the Creed

which proclaimed Jesus the 'unique' (Latin *unicus*) Son of God? It may have been so. At that time human nature and divine nature were regarded as two different entities or 'substances.' But we find it difficult to-day to believe that the universe is characterized by gaps of this kind, or that communion between God and man, and man and God, could be possible without some community of nature. And the teaching of the historical Jesus himself does not support such a disparity. The promise 'Ye shall be perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect' is echoed by the Johannine writer's 'it is not yet manifest what we shall be, but we know that . . . we shall be like him.'

That the Sonship of Jesus was unique, and that his union with the Father's will was perfect in a sense that we should not dare to claim for ourselves, is altogether true. In that sense he was indeed different from us. But that the difference is complete, one of nature, is another matter entirely. He never, so far as we know, claimed an exclusive relationship, but an inclusive. The whole object of his mission was to bring all men into the fellowship of his own relation to God.

> 'For it became him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all (out of) one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.' (*Hebrews* ii, 10, 11.)

That surely is the truth of the Incarnation for us to-day—that Jesus was indeed unique, the first of a new race. But he was not the last. So interpreted it gives a wholly different meaning to our conception of human nature and human history. We have heard and seen much recently of the depths to which human nature can fall. In and through Christ, if only through him, we see to what, in the purpose of God, human nature is destined to rise—'until we all attain unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.' That is the essence of the doctrine even in its classical sense. 'God became man,' said Athanasius, 'in order that man might become God.' His metaphysics of Godhead and manhood may not have been the same as ours. But the genius of Athanasius lay in that he was not bound by the iron bands of his logic.

Nevertheless, if that is what the words 'only son of God' signify for us, it is not the plain meaning of the Creed as it stands. Nor is this the only difficulty which is associated with the Creed. For following it is a series of historical clauses:

'Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried, He descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into Heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.'

Some of these do not, in the literal sense, hold our allegiance to-day. They were added to the Creed in order to preserve and express the faith of Christians in the reality of the human life of Jesus. That faith had been in danger from the moment Christianity came into contact with Hellenism.

We have noticed how the current philosophy of the time set a gulf between the divine and human, God and the world, pure spirit and base matter. Greek idealism, at its best, contributed much to the development of Christian thought. But at its worst it easily slipped into an enervating other-worldliness of phantasy and escape. Within the Church, this bastard Platonism, to use a phrase of Dean Rashdall, led to the creation of a Christ of mythology, and the submergence of the Jesus of history. There is no need to go into the nightmare speculation of the various systems which collectively are known as Gnosticism. Characteristic of them all is their dismissal of the material world, in almost oriental fashion, as incurably evil. Pure spirit can have no contact with base matter, and therefore the 'Incarnation' was an appearance only. The human body of Jesus was a mere instrument or vehicle of the divine principle of revelation, to be cast aside as soon as it was no longer needed, or the 'body' was a phantom, and the 'life,' in so far as it involved human experience, suffering and death, was an illusion.

To combat this Gnostic and Docetic movement, which would have cut Christianity adrift from its foundations, the historic clauses, as we have called them, were inserted into the baptismal Creed. The instinct behind these additions was sound, and the faith in the full humanity of Jesus which they were designed to express is ours to-day. We do not dispute the wisdom of the Church *at that time* to take the stand that it did, and the means whereby it took that stand. The four Gospels, to which Christians appealed for their facts, were collectively and separately all of a piece for them, and equally authoritative in every part. But the scientific and critical study of Christian origins and Christian literature, as it has developed during the last fifty years, impels us to ask whether we should express that faith in the same way now. And the answer which some of us would give is, quite frankly, that we should not. It is no doubt true, for example, that the clause 'born of the Virgin Mary' was inserted, not to assert

the doctrine of the Virgin Birth as such, but to emphasize the full humanity of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless that consideration does not remove the difficulties which this clause has for many Christians to-day. In the traditional interpretation of the Creeds it is bound up both with the divinity and the manhood of our Lord. But there is no essential connection between the Virgin Birth and belief in the Incarnation, and there are many who, in all sincerity, hold the Incarnation without the Virgin Birth. Indeed, it is their belief in the full humanity of Jesus which stands in the way of their acceptance of his miraculous birth.

Again, few Christians to-day believe the literal meaning of the clause which asserts that, after his death, Jesus descended into Hell. With the very doubtful exception of *I Peter* it has no support from the New Testament. Its 'intention,' no doubt, was to complete the faith of the Incarnation — that in death, as well as in life, our Lord passed through all human experiences. But the Descent into Hell has always meant more than this, and the mediæval pictures of the harrowing of Hell represent pretty accurately what that meaning was for millions of Christians in centuries gone by. There are many things which we do not know yet, and the state of our Lord's spirit after death, as of our own, is one of them. For our own part we remember the words to the dying robber, 'This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise,' and are content to leave it at that.

Another claim which causes difficulties to-day is a consequence, though not a necessary consequence, of the most primitive Christian belief of all — the Messiahship of Jesus. That he claimed to be Messiah is as certain as anything can be, though the exact sense in which he made that claim to fulfil, and more than fulfil, the hopes of his people does not concern us now. But in some circles of Jewish thought part of the rôle of the Messiah was to preside at the Great Assize at the end of the Age, and the expectation of the Second Advent of our Lord in judgement was one of the most vivid beliefs of primitive Christianity. Again, how far this is derived from the teaching of Jesus himself is a matter of doubt. But though we still believe in the religious value of the clause, we are no longer bound by the apocalyptic imagery of later Judaism. The New Testament itself shews us another and a better way of regarding Divine Judgement — not as a single cataclysmic event at the end of time, but as a moral process operative in each one of us, and in human society at large.

It is considerations such as these which compel us to ask whether the Apostles' Creed is suitable for public recitation in our

churches to-day. It is in no spirit of disloyalty that we ask this. Sympathetically and historically interpreted, the Creed *need* not do violence to the faith of intelligently-minded Christians. But many a clergyman who has tried, be it never so tenderly, to explain the Creed honestly to his confirmation candidates, knows that in the ears of the young it must often sound more like explaining away. The alternative is to say nothing — to discover that others, from no love of Christianity, have said a great deal.

When we turn from the Apostles' Creed to the Nicene[1] Creed we find ourselves in an entirely different atmosphere. It is an Eastern conciliar Creed, as typical a representation of Greek theology as the Apostles' Creed is of the practical unspeculative mind of Rome and the West. And the contrast between the terse, factual style of the one and the full, rolling, carefully balanced, philosophically phrased language of the other is strikingly obvious.

The section which deals with the Person of our Lord has its origin in the line of thought found in the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel — the idea of the divine Creative Word (*Logos*) which became Incarnate in Jesus Christ. It was an idea altogether congenial to the spirit of the age. Especially at Alexandria, in the famous Christian University there, is was combined with the Platonic tradition of religious philosophy in a truly liberal spirit. As expounded by Clement of Alexandria, and the more famous Origen, the divine Logos, the Creative Reason and Wisdom of God, was no mere abstract principle, but the educator of the human race from the beginning, present in Moses and Socrates, prophet and philosopher alike, and wherever the light of goodness and truth had shone in the world. In Jesus Christ the divine creative activity, eternally generated from the Father, was fully manifested *sub specie humanitatis*. Here is an interpretation of Christianity at once rational, moral and spiritual which is still attractive. But the old problem of how to bridge the gap between God and the world and man raised its head again, in the form whether Jesus could, in the full sense of the word, be called divine. The hero of the long-drawn-out struggle that followed was Athanasius. As a thinker he was inferior to Origen. But he grasped firmly, what was only too easily forgotten, that Christianity is not a system of philosophy, but a religion, above all else a gospel of salvation. For him, moreover, salvation meant bringing man into fellowship with God, the transformation of human nature by contact with the divine nature. Unless the incarnate Logos was truly

[1] Actually it is not the Creed of the Council of Nicea, but substantially the same as the Creed of Cyril of Jerusalem, which was later adopted by the Fourth General Council at Chalcedon.

God as well as truly man, that union was for ever impossible. Man, as he would have said, could not become divine if God had not become man—*i.e.* if the Incarnation was not an act of God himself. Therefore, brushing aside all the niceties of logic, he asserted that Jesus Christ is of one and the same substance with the Father. This is the heart of the Creed of Nicea, and it means nothing less than this—that in Jesus we are in contact with God; that 'the Jesus of history is wholly one with the creative forces which move in the world to-day'; and that what we respond to and reverence and worship in him is a response to God Himself. It means, in short, that not only is Jesus of one substance with the Father, but that the Father is of one substance with Him.

Moreover, taken together with the Logos Doctrine of the Platonists, which teaches that the divine Word indwells supremely in Jesus, but in varying degrees in all men, we have an expression of the faith of the Incarnation which is still of great value to-day. It is one which makes the Nicene Creed, rightly understood, of far greater value than the more frequently repeated Apostles' Creed, and if we had to choose between the two, it would be this that we should prefer. But here again the operative clause needs to be 'rightly understood.' For though the Nicene Creed presupposes and implies the doctrine of the *Logos* in its wider and universal sense, it does not do so explicitly. There must be many more who are familiar with the Creed than are aware of this historically valid interpretation. But that may not be their fault.

The conclusion to which we are finally led is that what is required is a fresh evaluation of the Incarnation in terms which are readily intelligible to-day. The *Logos* doctrine, helpful and suggestive though it be, no longer speaks the language of our time, and however carefully the terms 'divinity' and 'humanity' are explained they imply a fundamental cleavage which ordinary people find it difficult to bridge. The modern conception of personality, which brings both God and man within its range, would seem to be the most promising in this respect. But having said this, we must leave it there.

This paper began with a series of questions. It does not claim to have answered them adequately. But what has been said will serve to show that, in Prof. Bethune-Baker's words,

> 'No Creed can ever be understood as a document by itself. It cannot say all it means: ecclesiastical formulas never do. . . . They are perfectly coherent in their original framework of historical, philosophical, and scientific presuppositions. They come to us in the fashion of their time. The categories of thought in which they are expressed are not ours to-day. The questions with which they are concerned do not present

themselves to us in the same form.' (*The Faith of the Apostles' Creed*, pp. 29, 38.)

The Creeds stand, as they have always stood, monuments to the faith and conclusions of those who made them, milestones on the way by which the Church has come. As such, they have their value and their uses, and it would be an act of vandalism to add or take away. But it is another question whether they meet adequately the religious needs of Christian folk to-day, or the practical needs of the Church in teaching and guiding its people. This discussion has been necessarily confined almost entirely with those parts of the Creeds that are concerned with Jesus Christ. It must have become obvious that while they have much to say about His Person, they are silent about those great moral and spiritual values which He taught, and for which He lived and died. Those values were never more in need of emphasis than to-day, and a creed which ignores all reference to Christian conduct and duty is to that extent defective. This is not to say that the Christian religion is merely a system of ethics. It is clearly much more than that. But no creed expresses the whole of the Christian faith. No creed could. What is sorely needed to-day is the provision, for use in worship and instruction, of simple affirmations of faith and duty which would in no sense be substitutes for the ancient Creeds, but alternatives supplementing them — affirmations which will give a more adequate expression to those fundamental spiritual and moral truths which men have always found in Jesus Christ. With them we might recover our unity. We might also regain our nation.

THE HISTORIC JESUS AND MODERN EVANGELISM

By the Rev. Denys Whiteley, M.A.

THE influence of Jesus Christ is not confined to those who call themselves His followers. And yet He is able to influence far more profoundly those who are consciously His disciples and acknowledge Him as their master.

The practical task of Evangelism is therefore one of supreme importance; it is also a task of supreme difficulty. All members of this Conference are first Christians and secondly Modern Churchmen. Evangelism is difficult for Christians and, superficially viewed, even more difficult for Modern Churchmen.

A Roman Catholic priest recently said to me: 'People nowadays are not interested in truth; they want authority.' The proportion of truth contained in this statement is unpleasantly high: those who are interested in truth seldom go to the Church to find it; those whose tastes are authoritarian can find what they desire only too easily in the Church. There is a great temptation to give the people the stones they demand instead of the bread they need. From the practical viewpoint of a desire to fill a church, it is far more effective to say: 'Failure to go to Mass on Sunday is mortal sin, and those who die in mortal sin are lost,' than to give the true positive and spiritual reasons for attending public worship. It can plausibly be argued that those who are accustomed to crudity and unreality in the cinema are to be won for the Church only by the employment of similar means. It is not for me to condemn other bodies, but for English Modernists like ourselves, to whom truth is sacred, it would be sheer treachery to fill our churches by distorting the Gospel of the Historic Jesus.

It is not the case that Modernism empties churches. Negativism will of course empty any church, but a true Modernism which is positive and spiritual does not, in my experience, have this effect.

The disadvantages of the Modernist in the sphere of evangelism are more apparent than real: he is especially wary of employing those improper methods which are rightly abhorred by the best members of all parties; and all of us are blamed for the faults of the negative minority.

So much for defensive modernist apologetics. It is our duty to point out definite abuses among Churchmen of another hue, but we should never indulge in negative criticism if it can possibly be avoided.

We turn with relief to a more important task, the consideration of those difficulties which beset all Christians alike.

'We are living in a post-Christian world.' 'Christianity is an interesting cultural survival.' Such words are always ringing in our ears. All Christians are alike aware of the widespread nature of the belief that our religion is a thing of the past. It is a fact that the influence of the Churches in England has declined during the last fifty years. From this unquestionable fact has been drawn the superficial and illegitimate inference that, because the stock of Christianity is now declining, therefore Christianity is false. To this argument it is sufficient to reply that, as Professor K. S. Latourette has pointed out in his valuable seven-volume *History of the Expansion of Christianity*, there have been worse declines in the past, and these declines have invariably been succeeded by even greater advances. But the work of Latourette is a potential source of danger if we abuse it by making it into a pretext for doing nothing. Advances have not come automatically; they have been the fruit of courage, perseverance and hard, unremitting toil.

The task which we have to face is difficult, but not impossible. We shall now examine some of the causes of the difficulty under three headings, *ecclesiastical*, *intellectual* and *psychological*. I have no cheap and easy solution to offer. It is easy to outline a grandiose scheme which would be successful if generally adopted; the weaknesses of the scheme are never exposed because the scheme is never put into practice. It will be more useful to make suggestions which would not achieve a complete success but which could be adopted by those members of this conference who found them suitable for the conditions under which they themselves are working

The only *ecclesiastical* cause which I need mention is the fact of disunion. The splitting of the Church of England into two sections, Anglican and Methodist, was a disaster. For this disaster John Wesley was not to blame: the true authors of a schism are often not those who initiated the split, but the men who compelled them to do so. Schisms, like amputations, are tragic in their consequences even when they are inevitable. By this and other divisions the spiritual vigour and the social influence of Christianity in England have been seriously diminished.

The second group of causes is the *intellectual* group. Its importance is not always realized; it is often alleged that men remain

aloof from Christianity not because they doubt the resurrection of the flesh, but because Christianity seems to them completely irrelevant. Two points must here be stressed. First, my experience on the staff of the Student Christian movement has convinced me that many agnostics dismiss Christianity for intellectual reasons because they are the victims of naïve misconceptions, for example because they imagine that it is of the essence of Christianity to believe in the reconstitution of corpses, or because they ignorantly imagine that Jesus never existed. I have encountered these two cases and many others of a similar nature in the last few months.

Far more numerous, however, than those who dismiss Christianity because of consciously realized intellectual difficulties are those who disregard it because Christianity as they understand it bears no relation to the real world as they conceive it. The blame for this must be shared between science falsely so called and Christianity falsely so called. With true Christianity and with true science we have no quarrel; and they have no quarrel with each other.

About the dangers of Christianity so called it is not necessary to speak at length; we are all aware of these perils. I need only say that they still exist. Scientific subjects properly presented in a well-balanced curriculum can be a most valuable method of cultural education, especially if the school or university is such that it has more to impart than the subjects in which it provides instruction. But in too many cases the sciences are presented only with the object of winning distinctions in School or Higher Certificate and high classes at the university. Technical ability is of the utmost importance to an industrial society, especially in time of war. In the last few years boys with a literary bent have been forced into the mould of scientific technicians in order to secure higher education. Many of those to whom the degree of Bachelor of Science is awarded are not true scientists at all—if they were I should not complain: they are uneducated technicians. For this unhappy state of affairs it would be most unjust to heap indiscriminate blame upon those who teach science in our schools and universities. Many of them are well aware of the trouble and are doing all in their power to provide a remedy, but the examination machine and the contemporary demand for scientific technicians have so far frustrated their endeavours.

The results of this situation are only too apparent. Fish which are denied access to the light can lose the power of vision. The great Charles Darwin, as a result of too much exclusive concentration upon natural science, lost his appreciation of poetry. Scholars and students whose attention is exclusively directed to those aspects of reality which are susceptible of investigation by

The methods of physics and of chemistry can hardly be blamed if they fail to appreciate the existence or the relevance of all that cannot be examined in a scientific laboratory.

Incredible as it may seem, many of these unfortunate victims of the unscientific inculcation of scientific knowledge do not assign any validity to history. They assign validity only to what can be substantiated by controlled experimentation, whereas history is based upon the investigation of sources. I asked one of them what he thought about astronomy, since astronomy largely depends not upon experiment controlled by the astronomer, but upon the observation of events whose occurrence is independent of the volition of the investigator. The reply was that there was 'something rather phoney about astronomy.' I once asked a student whether he believed in the assassination of Julius Caesar. He replied that he supposed it was true, though he did not see how it could be proved, and that in any case it was irrelevant. It is true that these are extreme cases, but it is also true that many people in this world disregard everything that falls outside the realm of the student of chemistry and physics.

If a man is stone deaf, it is vain to imagine that he will respond to good music and not to bad. Those who are deaf to all that transcends the boundaries of natural science have no more use for the religion of the Historic Jesus than they have for the unhistorical perversions of the Bible which are associated with the name of Judge Rutherford. They prefer an authoritarian religion, if any, because it saves them the trouble of thinking. It would be ludicrous to imagine that we can win such people by cutting out all that offends them. Christianity which is not true to the Historic Jesus is Christianity no more. I am glad to be able to say that my strictures do not apply to all students of the sciences of nature. Many of them accept the Christian position if it is properly presented. But the educational system of this country, as educationists know only too well, stands in need of considerable modification. Those who are seeking to bring about a situation in which education is truly education and not a mere teaching of subjects, a situation in which cultural development receives its proper place by the side of technical competence, are doing work of more than educational importance. They are doing a most valuable work of indirect evangelism; they are striving to create a situation in which the Gospel of the Historic Jesus can be understood and accepted.

We now come to *psychological* reasons for indifference to the appeal of the Historic Jesus. There was a time when thousands of our fellow-countrymen used to go to church for inadequate reasons. In these days church-going is regarded as a sign of a

weak mind or, at best, as an amiable eccentricity. A vicar once asked a man whom he knew well through A.R.P. why he did not attend public worship. The reply was to this effect: 'Often on a Sunday evening I have longed to go to church; but if I did, I should be a marked man; unless my conduct were perfect, I should be called a hypocrite.' In many districts the whole weight of local custom is opposed to organized religion. A young man who goes to church or chapel feels that he is cutting himself off from his friends. In country villages the church used often to enjoy the support of the local squire. Death-duties have decimated the squires, and the church has suffered. Many people nurse an ancient grudge against the church because of inconsiderate behaviour by some long-dead clergyman or Sunday school teacher. These are not good reasons for staying away from church: they are very bad reasons; but it is by reasons of this kind that men are frequently actuated. It is unnecessary to give a lengthy catalogue of such reasons; this sample will suffice.

Two questions arise. Since in many cases the objection is not to the religion of the Historic Jesus, but to church attendance, ought we not to be content with something short of those standards of public worship which have hitherto been considered desirable? Secondly, is the task of evangelism to be undertaken by parishes or by teams of evangelists? It is true that public worship has often been conducted and that the sacrament of Holy Communion has often been misunderstood in a manner which would have forfeited the approval of Jesus Christ. But we shall all agree that the abolition of public worship and of the Gospel Sacraments would be an unpardonable betrayal. And yet there is, I believe, a place for the disciple of Christ who is not a practising member of the visible Church. Thousands of those who listen-in to the B.B.C. services never darken the doors of any church; we should be thankful that they have at least this link. The Bishop of Wakefield and others have conducted fifteen-minute services with four-minute sermons in factories. Workers who would never dream of going to church, because it 'is not done' and because they 'cannot follow the service,' are yet able to gain much from this factory worship. In some areas, notably slum areas, it is possible for a clergyman to do untold good by personal work, sick-visiting and club-work, and yet not to fill his church. Public worship and regular reception of the Holy Communion by all is an ideal which we must never lose; but if we cannot attain this ideal, we should not scorn to do the good work which lies within our power.

The parochial system is often said to have broken down in urban areas. What has occurred is that the old-style territorial unit

has given place to a congregation which is eclectic. Its members do not live in the parish area, but attend the church and sign the electoral roll because they like the vicar or the way in which the services are conducted. With the issue between the territorial and the congregational systems we are not concerned. The question is whether evangelization is to be carried out by the parish, or by some special team of diocesan shock troops. We must first decide whether the parochial system has a future or no. It can be argued that the parochial system grew up when England was a country of villages and that it has no place in the amorphous, atomized society of the twentieth century, a society in which it took a blitz to make men know their next door neighbours. Sociologists are agreed that it will be essential to rebuild some kind of community life. Countless experiments will doubtless be made in this direction, and most of them will be abandoned. I feel that the Church would be most ill-advised to give up the parochial system and to adapt itself to conditions which are extremely fluid; if we adapt ourselves too wholeheartedly to 1946 we shall be hopelessly outmoded in 1956. We are now living in a transitional period, that is to say, in a period of exceptionally rapid development. We ought not to commit ourselves to an entirely new system until conditions are more stable. In the final upshot, I believe that the parochial system will be modified but not abolished. In the present time of flux it should be supplemented but not superseded. There is certainly a place for wireless evangelism and for special drives by bishops' messengers as well as for great rallies. But when all has been done, I am convinced that the main battle will be fought not upon the platforms of the high-powered evangelist or in the studios of the B.B.C. but in the parishes, in the schools and in the homes of England.

We must now consider what can be done, not by the bishops or by the Church Assembly, but by parish clergy, teachers and other lay-folk like ourselves, to forward, either directly or indirectly, the cause of evangelization. We are working under the disadvantage of war-weariness and of a grievous shortage of clergy. Keen, responsible lay workers are frequently hard to find. But when we have too much to do, we must establish a scheme of priorities, and the priority of evangelization should be very high indeed.

We can never be content with aiming to build up the fragments into which the Church has been sundered without attempting the task of union. A wound must heal from the bottom; if it is merely skinned over at the top, trouble will ensue. It is not sufficient for Moderators and Bishops to meet and to frame resolutions; co-operation must be practised at the parochial level.

Difficulties will be innumerable. In most cases they are due not to the clash of theological principles but to minor divergencies of custom; for example, two congregations may discover that they sing the same hymns to different tunes. Anyone who has attempted co-operation can testify to the formidable nature of a large number of petty differences. But the union of the Church can never be accomplished until local co-operation has taken place on a large scale; the advantages of union, both spiritual and practical, are so great that all our pains will be amply rewarded. For example, the Churches in a district might unite to carry out a canvass. Visiting on a sufficient scale has been impracticable during the war, and there have been vast shiftings of population. If canvassers went out two by two, one Free Church, one Anglican, to every house in the neighbourhood they would win some new worshippers for their churches, especially from those who used to go to church in their old home but have not yet become attached to their local church; they would replenish their Sunday schools and perhaps discover new teachers; they would bear witness to the unity of the local branches of the Christian Church; and by working together for their common Lord they would realize more fully that in Him we are all one. It is hardly necessary to add that lawful authority should not be flouted.

In forensic medicine it is often less important to treat individual cases of, *e.g.*, bronchitis than to eliminate the basic conditions, such as inadequate housing, which have given rise to the disease. In the same way, evangelism as commonly understood will achieve only meagre results unless we also attack the basic conditions which have given rise to the present situation. The basic conditions include disunion, intellectual troubles and psychological factors. The fundamental importance of co-operation, both for its own sake and as a step towards union, has already been stressed. We must direct our attention to intellectual troubles.

There is no need to repeat the exhortation to express the eternal truths in twentieth century thought-forms when we occupy the pulpit. I should like to make a plea for positive and explicit teaching. It is necessary to state clearly that the early chapters of *Genesis* are not 'true' in the historical sense any more than the parable of the Good Samaritan is 'true' in the historical sense, but that both are a valuable source of spiritual truth. I have found that university students are frequently unaware of the fact that *Genesis* i is not history and that this flesh does not rise again.

War experience has revealed a terrible ignorance about religious matters. Soldiers have asked 'Why is there so much talk about this place Bethlehem?' Members of the A.T.S. did not know

the meaning of Easter Day. The reason is partly that parents have failed to do their duty, partly that teachers in schools have used the period set aside for religious instruction as an opportunity for collecting milk-money or as an additional arithmetic hour. If it is true that interest begets knowledge, it is equally true that knowledge begets interest. Men are 'not interested in religion' because they know nothing about it. Under the new Education Act religious instruction in schools will be taken more seriously, provided that there is available a supply of teachers who have the necessary knowledge and the ability to impart it. Many clergy are very properly eager that their younger parshioners should consider the opportunity of serving God which is offered by the sacred ministry. A similar opportunity is offered by the teaching profession, especially to those who are willing to specialize in Religious Knowledge. In the sphere of secondary education it is important that masters should be qualified to teach Scripture and some other subject. It is often possible for those who are already competent teachers of, *e.g.*, history to acquire the additional knowledge by sacrificing their free time. The diffusion of knowledge about the Historic Jesus is a great contribution to the work of evangelization, although we must never forget that while knowledge about Him can be taught, knowledge of Him is something which is 'caught, not taught.'

The parish clergyman can sometimes work up his people to the point where they are eager to undertake an 'evangelistic effort.' Perhaps it would be possible to begin by interesting the P.C.C. in *Toward the Conversion of England*, which contains many valuable suggestions. I have deliberately avoided discussion of 'evangelistic efforts' as such, not because they are of no value, for if wisely planned and competently executed they can have lasting results, but because I am convinced that it is far more important to increase the efficiency and the effectiveness of our normal work in schools and in parishes. My work in a large and flourishing Birmingham parish has corroborated the teaching which I received at Ripon Hall that the Occasional Offices present us with one of our greatest opportunities. Canon E. F. Hall has stated that the most hardened of men can be touched on three days in his life: his wedding day, the day when his first child is baptized and the day when his mother is buried. If these services are properly and reverently conducted and are followed up by a visit, much good can result. Even if the family does not come to church for more than a few weeks at the most, it is often possible to give them something which will last them to the day of their death and beyond.

Many are consciously seeking the Historic Jesus, but fail to realize that the Church can help them. We have often to discover them and to deal with them as individuals. Far more are vaguely looking for something or are conscious of a hollowness in life, but do not consciously realize that the Historic Jesus is the answer to their need. We can often help them best not by doing the right thing, not by employing the correct technique, but by being the right kind of person. If our parishioners reflect in their lives the Light of the World, they will lead others to that Light.

There are many minor suggestions which could be made. For instance, since occasional worshippers find difficulty in following our services, there is much to be said for printed cards. I shall not make other suggestions of this kind because what suits one parish does not suit another, and because those who have enjoyed more parochial experience than I have will be able to tell us of those methods which have proved to be successful.

The task of Evangelization, then, is one of supreme importance and one of supreme difficulty. It is not more difficult for English Modernists than it is for other Christians. It is wrong to imagine that Christianity is false because of its numerical decline in England. The causes of our present weakness include disunion as well as intellectual and psychological factors. We should aim at making all communicants but we should not scorn lower standards. Special missions have a part to play, but the brunt of the battle will fall on the parishes and on the schools.

We should practise co-operation with members of other branches of the one Church of Christ. The intellectual difficulties must be faced by clear and positive teaching from the pulpit and in the classroom. The opportunities presented by parish work should be utilized as fully as our resources in time and men will allow.

What will be the result of our activities? The final result can only be full and complete success, because we are trying to do the will of God. As for the immediate future, prophecy would be an impertinence. We should not be anxious or depressed about the future, but with full trust and confidence in the God whom we serve, we should apply ourselves to those tasks which lie immediately before us, leaving the distant issues in higher hands than our own.

CONFERENCE SERMON

JESUS AND THE FUTURE

By the Rev. Marcus Knight, B.D., Canon of St. Paul's.

'I am the first and the last and the living one.'—*Rev.* xiii, 8.

WE can be fairly sure of one truth when we try to speculate about the future. That is that the future will probably not be what we should have expected. Hence it may seem foolish even to discuss such a theme as that assigned for this sermon. On the one hand, we may say that we can only talk about the present, for that at least is here and now, and we are living in it. On the other hand, we may make the assumption that the future will be in some ways not unlike the past or present, and that therefore if we can discern some trends of the present we may draw imaginary lines into the unknown future and see where they lead us. We cannot but think that there is some rhythm in the lives of people and of nations, as there is in nature itself. We find similar situations arising in different historical moments, and we find men called on to make decisions and to endure sufferings in each generation. The significance of tragedy is that we see in the drama that men are ambitious, foolish or selfish, and that sorrow comes, and that men triumph in adversity. The same truth holds of nations and empires.

'The kingdoms of the earth go by
In purple and in gold;
They rise, they flourish, and they die
And all their tale is told.'

It is easy to believe that there is a recurring cycle of human affairs, and to write it all off as vanity and emptiness. The importance of Jesus for the future is that he introduces novelty. We can never be sure that something will not turn up. When things are at their blackest, men are raised up to meet the need of the times; the downward drift is halted, and the forces of life move forward. 'Behold I make all things new,' says the risen Christ to the writer of the Apocalypse. The spirit of Jesus is a creative spirit. All we may say of the future is that it will be in some ways like the past and the present, and in some ways it is certain to be unlike the past or the present. But Jesus, who was and is and is to come, is there always, and he will judge the evil and conserve the good. Our first task must then be to draw such inferences as we may

about the possible future and try to imagine what Jesus will do to meet the needs of men.

The probable future is rooted in the present and the immediate past. But so fast have been the changes in recent years that we can discover two sides of the background of the present. Those sides are divided by the outbreak of the first World War in 1914. There are still many people of influence and in positions of leadership whose minds and outlook were formed during a period which seems to younger people almost as remote as the eighteenth century. In those days before 1914 there was a more or less settled order of society. As one reads memories of those days, such as Osbert Sitwell's *Left Hand, Right Hand*, Wingfield Stratford's *Recollections*, or Sassoon's *Memoirs of a Fox-hunting Man*, and other such autobiographies and recollections, one seems to be taken back to an order of life which, although it concealed much social distress and injustice under its polished surface, yet had ideals and a readiness for reform. It rested on assumptions that within the general order there was room for discussion and change, for the removal of evil and for the development of human affairs in reasonable ways. There was a kind of order in religious life, and within that order there could be criticism and discussion. There was that which could be criticised and revolted against, but within limits of reason which would prevent the complete overthrow of the harmony and order so far established. Theological liberalism of these days, so often on the right wing in politics and on the left in theology, assumed the continuance of the existing social order — subject to some necessary readjustments — and the belief that it was possible to make religion more intelligible and more attractive within the general harmony of life. What we might call the main task of old-fashioned liberalism in religion was to pursue truth and promote reasonable enquiry, given the assumption that religion itself would go on and that the social order would not be radically changed. It was a noble effort, though critics like Canon Roger Lloyd hold that it was a failure in that it appealed chiefly to the more highly educated and often to the more privileged classes as opposed to the millions of the common people. This is not the place to refute that charge, although it could be refuted despite the grain of truth in it.

The situation since 1914 is very different. The background of those who have grown to conscious maturity since the last war is not a settled one. They have no basic idea of a rhythm or harmony of life. Their childhood was spent on shorter rations than they might otherwise have enjoyed, and they grew up in an atmosphere of uncertainty and sudden death, which struck at home after home

s the flower of English youth was killed in the trenches of France. War and rumours of war have provided the background of their ves. Industrial strife has been a commonplace. They have seen he ungodly flourish and evil men succeed. They have known good nen unemployed through no fault of their own, and they have ome to despise and reject a social order which permitted goods o be destroyed in one part of the world while men hungered in nother. They have inevitably been impressed for good or evil ith the social experiments of Russia and Germany. They have ared less for liberty, either their own or other people's, and more or efficiency. They have grown up, generally speaking, in a far reater ignorance of the elementary truths of the Christian religion nan did their fathers. With their enthusiasm for science and their eal for mechanical mastery they have not bothered much to dis- uss and reason about religion, for they did not assume its neces- ity or its importance. The generation which has risen up since 914, and is all too little represented in the movement we ourselves are for, is one which is not usually *discussing* Christianity or any ther religion, but one which needs to be *confronted* with Christian- y or some other philosophy of life which it will either accept or eject. The Liberal Churchman, preparing some young person for Confirmation, or meeting the religious difficulties of some youthful dult, will find that they are not much interested in or bothered by he same problems and difficulties which troubled their fathers. These difficulties arose when men with some existing religion were onfronted with new scientific truths or new methods of Biblical riticism which disturbed their existing structure of belief. To-day here is no structure of belief, so that the difficulties consist in the roblem of whether God exists at all, whether He does anything, whether He has spoken to men at all in the past or the present, whether it is possible to build a social or international community ccording to Christian principles, whether there is any destiny for nan outside the few fleeting years of his physical existence. Hence he appeal to-day of a religious presentation which carries au- hority, which speaks with some certainty, which offers a centre of ocial cohesion and a triumphant victory over tragedy and death. s it possible to offer such a religious presentation on liberal lines o a battered and baffled generation which has never known any eligious or social security, or must we leave the challenge to be net by the clanging cymbals of Barthianism, or the polished effi- iency of Romanism? We cannot offer any religious answer to the needs of men which is rational through and through, for there is a place where mystery merges down as reason reaches up. But at east we can strive to be less irrational than some religious solu

tions of the day, and yet to present Jesus as Lord and Liberator to those who think of him only as a faint figure of hypothetical history who is the object of discussion rather than the Lord of thought and action. Can the Liberal Churchman learn something from the people he can so easily criticize, realizing that they are trying to answer the real questions which face the younger people even though they may be answering them along lines which he must regret? Is it possible to offer a liberal doctrine of salvation, as it is now possible on the whole to offer a liberal doctrine of creation? The younger generation has not started in light and then moved into darkness. It has started in darkness and not yet moved into light. Unlike those who grew up before 1914, its main insecurity is social and economic. Thus it is tempted to be on the left wing politically and on the right wing theologically, for it must have some basis of security from which to operate if it is not to be entirely swept away.

The first main trend, then, that we can discern for the future lies in the direction of presenting Jesus to a generation which has no settled order of thought or life, and needs an *answer* to its questions rather than new questions to discuss. The second main trend can be seen as the result of the weakening of the sense of personal individuality and the strengthening of the sense of the 'individual-in-the-group.' It is not so long ago that the main stress fell upon individual self-help and initiative. There was a due reward to labour and enterprise. Each man had his own race to run, and his own soul to save. Men came to think of themselves chiefly as individuals over against other individuals. Personal freedom was held to be of the highest value, and there was room for eccentricity, oddity, and peculiarity, for men to shine with great ability or to sink to a level of extreme incapacity. There was, within the order of social life, a far greater richness and variety of individuality than there is to-day, although there may still survive a few odd corners of rural England where this emphasis upon the individual in his own place within the order of life is yet to be found. The religious emphasis in those days lay upon the private experience of the individual, and Jesus was presented to him as his individual Lord and Saviour.

But the whole emphasis is changing, and the trend of the future is more and more towards the emphasis upon the group or the team. The age of science and mechanical efficiency has made it inevitable. One has only to watch men at work in a large factory to see the way in which the total operation is made up of thousands of smaller operations. The machine calls for a team job. The mastery of the material, the controlled use of power, the efficient

rive towards the speedy success of a particular operation are the ims to which the team's effort is directed. The individual still as his own place, but it is a place *with others*, as a member of a roup. It may seem in some ways that his freedom has been cut own, but as he has never known the old-fashioned kind of indi- idual freedom he does not miss it, nor does he specially crave for . To do his job with his fellow-workers and play his own part— owever small—is his fulfilment. Modern industry does not yet dequately meet the spiritual need, but during the war, both in the orces and among those at home, and in Civil Defence, the aim as effectively realized. There are thousands of younger people o-day who are happy and contented with this kind of 'freedom- n-togetherness' and want nothing of the old freedom for private ndividuality. The planned social order, the increase in controls, nd the general social tendencies of our day do not fall harshly pon them. They respond to these tendencies, and do not want to trive against them.

There is something menacing about this, in spite of the many ood things which arise out of it. It has become possible to see a uge party of some two hundred young men and women out on a amble over the English countryside, enjoying freedom from their ork and from the burden of industrial life in the great towns. hey reach a beauty spot, where for some ten minutes they relax heerfully and see rapidly what there is to be seen. Suddenly the eader blows a whistle, and in twos and threes they rise to their eet and are off again on the next stage of the morning's exercise. Whistles for work, whistles for play may all too easily lead to histles for thought, and then everything depends on who is to low the whistle.

To such a generation Jesus must be seen as the inspirer of true roup life, the Personality around which the spirit of team action an be built. He will need to be known to people in these days nto which we are moving as one who is Leader of the fellowship, who knows each person individually yet handles them together. In eam activity, in common action for carrying forward the Will of God, Jesus may be brought out of the distant past into the immedi- te present, and his spirit known as active within the group to-day. hat is the significance, I suppose, of experiments such as that ow being conducted by the Iona Community, where in team action nd common life a group together comes to understand more deeply he secret of fellowship with their Lord and with one another.

The third trend we may discern to-day as we try to estimate he future is closely associated with this group idea. It is the novement to a unifying super-national group which will take up

into itself the best of the particular contributions of any section and create a really living visible community of all nations and peoples. Two world wars have led many to emphasize the judgment of God upon the nations and upon our so-called civilization. We have realized that where systems are set up which are not in accordance with the purposes of God they are sooner or later broken down. We are well aware that we live in a time of crisis, that we have reached the end of an age, and that it is not beyond the realm of possibility that the new scientific discoveries in atomic energy and bacterial warfare may sweep away all but fragments of the world we have known. But there is a driving movement towards unification. Some would have it through a social revolution on Communist lines in every country; some, like Mr. Churchill in his speech at Zurich on September 19th, will think in terms of an attempt to build again the unity of Europe which in some measure existed in the Middle Ages. But we have to think in world terms, now that distance has been so shortened by the marvellous inventions of man. The time is coming when men must think of themselves as followers of Jesus Christ first, and members of this and that national or colour group second. The Oecumenical Movement, the dispersal of Christian ideas and teachers all over the world, of which Professor Latourette has so vividly reminded us as the greatest triumph of the last hundred years of so — all these speak to us of Jesus as the Unifier. The man who can begin to think in world terms and catch something of the vision of the whole of God's Creation as the whole field of Christ's saving and reconciling work will see in the Person of Jesus Christ the One unifying Person to Whom all may turn, and so discover themselves members one of another, whatever their own national background, their colour, or their language. We need a picture of God's power and purpose to match the picture we have been given of his wonders in creation. Jesus is not simply judge, to condemn evil. He is also Unifier and Reconciler, the builder of the new community of Christian people together. We shall not get far in the task of reunion until we catch something of this vision, and then the machinery will be developed to make the unity of spirit into a unity of organism.

Here then are some of the trends of our day, as it seems to me, and Jesus has a place and meaning in them all. They afford us grounds for hope, though the obstacles in men's minds and fears are stubborn. Yet there is one definite aspect of the future of which nothing has so far been said, and it is the only definite future that there is for any of us. We are born to die. The only sure thing we know of the future is that it has a terminus, which may come swiftly

may be delayed. We have all faced in these last days the possibility of immediate death; and many of us have known the tragedy and pain in our families, and in those of our friends, when death has come upon one of those we cared for. It is a commonplace realization that we live in an insecure world. Eschatology is no longer a matter for mere discussion. It is a fact of experience. We live in a world where we have tasks and duties, but we know that it is a temporary abiding place. As the Rev. Eric Fenn has recently said:

> 'There is neither scriptural nor scientific warrant for the doctrine that the world is eternal. Christians have no right to ask for anything but the present moment; the most we can ask for is our *daily* bread. . . . The world's darkness is due to the loss of any sense of a beyond, and the world's impotence lies in its being imprisoned in its own creations. The Church which created the first Christian civilization (the end of which is now upon us) was a Church which lived on the edge of the eternal, which knew that the world was passing, and yet — nay, and therefore — that man's handling of the world mattered greatly. It was the paradox of obedience to God in a world which was by nature ephemeral.'

Jesus and the future must mean Jesus as he meets us as victor over death and Lord of eternity. We may have the most excellent planning, for security or for freedom; we may have achieved the supernational Christian community and abolished war; we may have penetrated to the deepest possible human understanding of the historic Jesus, and explored to the fullest the authority and power which was, and is, vested in Him. Yet still there is death to be faced and overcome. Here men face the final mystery alone. There in the future they will find the answer to those things which have perplexed them here. The same Jesus will be there, we believe, as we have come partly to know here. Schweitzer said, 'He comes to us as one unknown.' There is a mystery about his nature and personality which torments and attracts all those who come in contact with Him. It may be that He comes to us as one partly known, but he is not yet finally known. And as Schweitzer also said,

> 'to those who obey him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in his fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience, who He is.'

When we speak of Jesus and the future we are making the final commitment of our lives to Him, whom we desire to know because, though only partly known to us, He has called us to follow Him. In the last resort we move forward into mystery, and yet with Him, through life and through death, we believe there is light and life and truth, and we travel safely.

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FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF LIBERAL RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

Inaugurated at the Church House, Westminster, October 31st, 1898.

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The aims of the Modern Churchmen's Union are:—

1. *To affirm* the progressive character of God's self-revelation, and the certainty that no truth can lead away from Him.
2. *To proclaim* Christ and His Gospel in the light of modern knowledge, endeavouring to give a clear meaning to all phrases which are open to ambiguous treatment.
3. *To maintain* the right and duty of the Church of England to reject what is false and to restate what is true in her traditional dogmas.
4. *To defend* the freedom of responsible students, clerical as well as lay, in their work of criticism and research.
5. *To promote* the study of the Bible according to modern critical methods, and to interpret its message in the light of such study.
6. *To secure* more regard for beauty and truth in Church Services and the use of language and customs in harmony with modern thought.
7. *To promote* the application of Christian principles in public as well as in private life.
8. *To assert* the right and duty of the laity to take a due share in the government and work of the Church.
9. *To maintain* the historic comprehensiveness of the Church of England and to foster fellowship and co-operation both in Word and Sacrament with other Christian Societies.